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# THREE SCORE AND TEN

1886 - 1956

A STORY OF

## THE SWEDISH SETTLEMENT

OF

## STOCKHOLM AND DISTRICT

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1886 - 1956

## A STORY OF THE SWEDISH SETTLEMENT OF STOCKHOLM AND DISTRICT



BY

Gladys M. Halliwell

AND

M. Zetta D. Persson

1959

Dedicated to the Pioneers of  
Nya Stockholm Swedish Colony  
Excel District  
and the Village of Stockholm

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"The world may sound no trumpets, ring no bells;  
The book of life, the shining record tells".

Unknown: Attributed to  
Elizabeth Barrett Browning.



## PREFACE

It would be impossible to name all the sources from which we received help, either through information or encouragement, but we express our thanks to all those who assisted us in any way. We feel especially grateful and indebted to: Mr. Allan Turner, Provincial Archival Assistant, Mrs. Sara Erikson, Mrs. C. Lindoff, Mrs. Eric Sjodin, Mrs. A. Hoglund, Dr. W. Sahlmark, D. S. Macdonald, Erling Lindwall, Harold Sundberg, Percy Selin, Eric Berglund, Elis Jacobson, and Alex Sahlmark. We are grateful to the following for access to their records: The Rural Municipality of Fertile Belt, the Village of Stockholm, the district school boards, Godfrey Persson for access to the diary of his father, John Persson, and W. S. Persson, who throughout the years has kept a diary.

We thank Dean Halliwell who did our proof reading. His expressions of confidence and encouragement gave us the necessary patience and fortitude to complete the task.

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## FOREWORD

In their introduction to this book, its authors have generously and modestly indicated their indebtedness to a number of people; these acknowledgments are well deserved. But it would be much less than fair to allow the book to appear without a special tribute to the two people who played such a large part in conceiving the idea of a published history of the Swedish colony and the village of Stockholm, who spent untold hours in gathering material and editing it for publication, and who persevered at their task in the face of many obstacles, both foreseen and unimaginable. In brief, a special tribute to its authors, Mrs. Halliwell and Mrs. Persson, without whom this book would surely have remained a dream.

ERLING LINDWALL

(for the members of the  
Jubilee Committee)

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First Group of Settlers

## I.

# The Swedish Colony

OUR pioneers began life in the new world with very little material wealth, but with courage and with unbounded faith in the future. They encountered many difficulties, but never faltered in their determination to achieve success. Before them lay this new land of opportunities, and they turned resolutely to the task of making their colony a place all might view with satisfaction and pride. They laid its foundations well and strong: joy, sorrow and disappointments were theirs, but they pressed resolutely toward their goal. Today their descendants enjoy a way of life made possible only by the sacrifices of these adventurous folk, the pioneers from Sweden.

Why did these people leave their homeland? Why this great exodus to the Northwest Territories and to the United States? Sweden had known great agricultural prosperity in the years between 1850 and 1879, but then had come a depression which affected all classes of people. In North America, the implement companies had developed greatly improved farm machinery, whose use so reduced the costs of production that American farmers were able to undersell their competitors in the world markets. Sweden, among other European countries, founds its markets dwindling. Then, too, during the very prosperous years many of the great Swedish iron manufacturers had over-expanded, and declining world markets caused many business failures. For years, Sweden had enjoyed a very high birthrate, and now had almost a surplus of young, energetic people. They were ambitious, and could see very little possibility for the future in their native land. Many also resented the years of compulsory military service and, in general, there was unrest among the working classes.

During the early 1880's, the Canadian immigration authorities were very active abroad, and their offer of 160 acres of land was a great inducement to leave old lands for the new. Thus it was the coincidence of economic depression at home and the activities of Canadian agents abroad which made the eighties witness the maximum emigration from Sweden. Our settlers came from many walks of life, but many had had small land holdings on which farming, combined with logging, provided a livelihood, though the hours of work were long and arduous and logging was a particularly hazar-

dous occupation, in which many were crippled or lost their lives.

The glowing reports of the great Canadian West which were brought to Sweden by Emanuel Ohlen, the land agent who was instrumental in bringing us our first settlers, appealed strongly to Nils Johanson of Strom, Jamtland. Later in that year of 1883 he, with his wife and two of their children, came to Winnipeg, where work was available. The next year the three remaining members of their family joined them. Emanuel Ohlen was eager to establish a large Swedish settlement in the newly surveyed land of the Territories, so in 1885 he and Nils Johanson came to the district north of the Qu'Appelle River. The countryside reminded them of their Swedish home, with the river and the very heavily wooded hills of the valley. The more open countryside to the north appealed to them and they decided that here was the ideal location for the future Swedish colony. Upon their return to Winnipeg, friends and relatives in Sweden were quickly advised of the new venture.

Those who responded to Emanuel Ohlen's call were sturdy and self-reliant. Many of them proved their stamina and their fitness to endure the rigours of pioneer life long before they saw their homesteads, for they had travelled many weary miles by boat, train, and ox-drawn wagon, and many weeks had passed before they arrived at the site of their new homes. Many of the new settlers crossed the ocean in ships which bore little resemblance to today's luxury liners; some came in converted cattle boats, clean and freshly whitewashed, but totally lacking in privacy or comfort. There were no cabins, merely partitions dividing the men on one side from the women and children on the other. Here they lived, slept, and prepared the meals which few could eat, while many wept with loneliness and despair. In stormy weather, great waves threatened to engulf the small, rolling ships, and life in such cramped quarters was almost unbearable. But travel in the new land was little better, for the trains provided at this time were lacking in almost all comfort. The seats were plain, hard, wooden slats, and some of the cars had not even the most primitive sanitary facilities, so that the passengers, like those on the buses of today, were dependent on brief, scheduled stops. Experiences on these onetime cattle boats and on colonist trains were enough to daunt even the bravest adventurer, so it is gratifying to note that the families which survived these ordeals proved fine settlers. They, as well as their descendants, have made very worthwhile contributions to the life of our province.

Slightly more pleasant than the harrowing journeys sketched above was the trip of little Sara Johanson (now Mrs. Sara Erikson, and still living in Stockholm) who, with her two brothers, joined her family in Winnipeg in 1884. The brothers, John and Zacharias (who later followed the common Swedish custom of taking a sur-



Mr. and Mrs. Nils Johnson

name other than that of their father and became John and Zacharias Bergman) were, though young, experienced loggers and strong enough to enjoy the trip. Poor Sara, however, was then only eight years old and suffered the miseries of sea and train sickness. Come with us and retrace their journey.

From their home near Strom, the three young Johansons travelled by stage coach to Ostersund, a distance of approximately seventy miles. Following a train trip to Trondheim, in Norway, they boarded a small boat and sailed to Hull, England, from which point they made another journey by train to Liverpool to take passage on a Cunard liner bound for New York. More fortunate than many other emigrants, they had cabins which were clean and afforded privacy. Each passenger carried his own plate, cup, knife, fork and spoon, and all sat at long tables, at which plain but wholesome food was served to them. Their meals often consisted of boiled beef, potatoes boiled in their skins, bread, butter, and tea, the latter always diluted with milk and sugar. Now, over seventy years later, she who was the seasick child definitely prefers coffee.

When the boat docked in New York, the Johanson children left by river boat for Duluth. Their journey had been very long and expensive, and their money was almost gone, so it was with great relief that they took their seats in the train for Winnipeg, a train which lacked everything needed for a comfortable trip, but one

which would at least take them home. In Winnipeg, the Johanson family was reunited, the parents, daughters Carolina, Sara and Gunilla, and sons John and Zacharias.



Z. Bergman

In June of 1886 the first party of settlers left Winnipeg by train for Whitewood and their homesteads. In it were the Johanson family, two Olson brothers, Olaus and John, and a spinster from Norway, Miss Britta Sivertson, who had come to Winnipeg seeking land and, when unable to secure a homestead, decided to join this party and continue the trip to the new colony. She later kept house for Erik Soderberg, who arrived later in the same year but who sold his homestead to Daniel Petter Granstrom and, in 1893, returned to Sweden. Old timers recall him as a kindly man who, before he left, made ample provision for his housekeeper. A

small, comfortable house was built for her on a small plot of land which provided a garden, and with a cow and chickens her livelihood was assured. Here she lived until her death.

When our little group of original settlers reached Whitewood, they began immediately to prepare for life on the homestead. The government had loaned each of the homesteaders two hundred and fifty dollars, to be repaid within a specified time, though it appears that only the very first homesteaders in the colony were given this assistance. But Nils Johanson and his younger son, Zacharias Bergman, felt that this was indeed a land of opportunity. They were good managers and made excellent use of their loans, which were soon repaid. Zacharias Bergman paid one hundred and thirty dollars for a fine yoke of oxen, bought in Alexander, Manitoba, and with them he had the honor of ploughing the first furrow in the Swedish colony. In Whitewood the family purchased a cow costing fifty dollars, and her rich milk was a welcome and healthful addition to the settlers' meals. While Mr. Johanson and his family were detained in Whitewood, awaiting some necessary supplies, of which a kitchen stove was the most essential, the other members of the party pushed on. It was then that our pioneers first experienced the well-known hospitality of the prairies. Mr. Getty, a farmer in the

valley, offered to take them to their homestead, an invitation which was gladly accepted. They spent one night with this kindly family and, incidentally, tasted their first saskatoon pie. On the first of July the first party reached their home, wearied by the rough and winding trail, for the final lap of the journey was made over country having no trace of a road.

The three tents were pitched on the ground which was later to be the site of New Stockholm School and, with the tents pitched, the next task was that of unloading the wagon. Just what was unpacked from this first wagon on that July day in 1886, and from the second which Mr. Johanson brought the next week? There were trusty broadaxes, a grindstone with which to sharpen them, a plow, bedding, cooking utensils, and some plain, substantial kitchen furniture. After seventy years of use, one of those comfortable chairs may be seen in Mrs. Erikson's home. Nothing was brought from Sweden but one small, precious book, the Holy Bible, which too may be seen in the Erikson home, its well-worn pages testifying to the part it played in the lives of the Johanson family. Often in those early years comfort was found and fresh inspiration was gained as the word of God was read from that Swedish Bible. Another well-worn book in Mrs. Erikson's possession is a Swedish-English dictionary, of which each family received a copy from the Immigration Department.

With tents erected and unpacking completed, the settlers with grateful hearts gave thanks for a safe journey. The weather was perfect and the lovely countryside gave them promise of a rich, rewarding life. Their little celebration, in which they enjoyed appetizing food cooked over an open fire, marked the beginning of the annual First of July picnics which became a high spot in the social life of the colony. It was some years later that they learned that this day, so happy and eventful for them, was also the birthday of their new country.

From the day Nils Johanson first looked on the virgin land north of the Qu'Appelle River and approved it as a suitable location for the proposed new Swedish settlement in Canada, he never ceased to work for the community and, with his wife, wielded a mighty influence in the colony. In their home, the newcomers were welcomed and the lonely cheered. Nils was endowed with plenty of good common sense, and he helped many of the homesteaders to overcome the innumerable difficulties which beset them as they struggled to adjust themselves to an unfamiliar way of life. In all his work he was assisted by his wife, who was tireless in her efforts to help all who were in need. Though not a robust woman, she never considered herself and her limitations, but responded to every call for help, regardless of the hour or the weather. Her cheery presence

and her knowledge of home nursing meant much to the young mothers of the colony at the birth of their children, and this country owes a great debt to the midwives of the pioneer days who gave so freely of their time, without any thought of payment.

Ohlen Post Office was named in honor of the first land agent, and was located in the Johanson home. The weekly trip for their mail was, for many people, an opportunity to visit and to share a meal with the postmaster and his family. Occasionally these extra people at the Johanson's dinner table proved a strain on the family's meal planner, but there was never any problem of "leftovers" in that home. For approximately two years Nils made weekly trips to Kaposvar to get the mail for Ohlen, but after this period it was delivered directly to Ohlen from Whitewood. During those first two years, this sturdy Swede walked the fourteen miles each week, the mail sack slung over his shoulder, without missing a single trip. The winter trips were his delight, for then he sped across the prairie on his skis.

Sorrow came to this family in 1888 when Johan, the elder son, suddenly died. He had been employed in Winnipeg and arrived home, weary and ill, bringing with him a party of immigrants. The new arrivals were saddened, and the entire little community grieved, over the young man's untimely death. At that time there was no cemetery, so he was buried on a shady hillside on his brother's



BACK ROW: left to right — Sara Johanson, O.E. Lindgren, Nellie Johanson  
FRONT ROW: Erik Erikson, Martha Zakrison, Z.E. Stromquist



farm. This plot of land continued in use as a burial ground until the Mission Covenant and the New Stockholm Lutheran church congregations were organized and burial grounds were consecrated.

Nils Johanson was a man of vision and a tireless worker. He had strong convictions and was not easily swayed by public opinion, and his neighbors soon learned to depend on his sound judgment. Church, school, roads, politics, everything which concerned the welfare of the community received his attention, while his wife's fine neighborly qualities endeared her to everyone who met her. She instructed her daughters in all the housewifely skills she possessed, and they were thus well prepared to assume the care of their own homes.

The first wedding in the New Stockholm Mission Covenant church was solemnized on February 1st, 1899 by the pastor, C. O. Hofstrand. The young bride, Sara, was the second daughter of the Nils Johansons, while the groom, Erik Erikson, was the son of the Erick Zakrisons, who had come from Sweden in 1888. The bride wore a lovely white, lace-trimmed cashmere dress with high collar and lily-point sleeves, which she had designed and made. A long, misty veil and a wreath of orange blossoms completed the costume of the charming, fair haired bride, who was attended by her sister, Gunilla, and by the groom's sister, Martha.

A reception and a Swedish high tea followed the ceremony, which was attended by members of every family in the community. The bride and groom had worked toward establishing their new home, which was ideally situated in the Qu'Appelle valley. Their first house was only twelve by sixteen feet in size, but it was a home where hospitality was dispensed with a lavish hand. Both the Eriksons were active workers in the Mission Covenant Church, and much of their social life was centered around it.

The three quarters of a section of land which they farmed provided them with a good livelihood, and they looked to the future with confidence. However, by 1906 the lack of a school for their growing family proved disturbing to the parents, and they decided to sell their farm and move to the new village of Stockholm. The price of land was low, and this farm was sold to its present owners, the Fredlunds, for six thousand dollars. In 1906 the crop was excellent, and six thousand bushels of wheat was threshed on the Erikson farm. The money from the sale of the wheat and the farm was used to purchase land north of Stockholm, as well as a home in the village. Eleven children grew up in this home, which has been known and honored in the district for over fifty years. These children realize the true worth of their pioneering father, who died in 1924, and of their mother, who continued to provide them with a comfortable, happy home, all without the benefit of such social aid as is enjoyed today.

Sara Erikson had proved herself an apt pupil of her mother, and was an excellent homemaker. She grew up with parents and in a home where there was a keen interest in both local and world affairs, and Sara was an avid listener when people met there to discuss the problems of the times. The men of the Swedish colony were always ready and willing to make or to listen to speeches, and on mail days the Johanson kitchen was the locale of many spirited debates. Growing up at a time when a woman's place was considered to be in the home, and when the career woman was almost unknown, Sara's many talents went into homemaking. Her all too few precious years in school kindled within her a great desire for knowledge, and one of her regrets today is for the lack of educational advantages experienced by the young people of her day. A keen zest for learning still characterizes Sara Erikson in her eighty-second year, and she continues to exercise a fine influence in her own community and far beyond.

The early settlers from Sweden found the wooded hills of the Qu' Appelle and the surrounding country very similar to their homeland. They were, almost without exception, experienced woodsmen, so were soon able to build comfortable homes. They used logs from the hills, squared with the broadaxes and fastened with handmade wooden pegs. These were sturdy dwellings, built to withstand any storm, and the house built in the summer of 1886 by the Nils Johansons, their home for many years, still is in excellent condition and in use on the farm of Charles Sandine, proof of how well the early settlers built. This house "saw a heap of living" and was the place where neighbors gathered to discuss the many problems which faced them in those early years. Here, too, they came to worship. One or two of our remaining pioneers have vivid recollections of the late Dr. Hugh MacKay, a pioneer missionary to the Indians, worshipping with them. This stalwart man of God spoke in English to people whose knowledge of the language was meager, but such was his great spiritual power that all felt God's presence and found strength for the coming days. The settlers sang for the sheer joy of singing, and Dr. MacKay rejoiced in song with them. What did it matter that the words were sung in two different languages, for the fine old tunes were the same and each voice was raised in thanksgiving and praise.

In addition to building the log homes in readiness for the winter, the new homesteaders were able to break some ground. Early in the following spring the breaking was cultivated and carefully prepared for the sowing of the first wheat in the colony. Red Fife, purchased from the government, was broadcast by hand. They had been assured that it was free from weeds, so were indeed annoyed to find mustard growing rampant amidst the wheat. Even

though the acreage was small, many hours of back-tiring labour was required to eradicate this noxious weed. But the grain ripened and was carefully harvested by hand; this precious wheat was to be used solely for seed, and it was necessary to flail it with great care. Canvas was spread carefully on the ground and the grain placed on it so that each kernel might be saved. Then came four husky young men to help in this first threshing; they were new arrivals in the colony that year, the Messrs. Lindgren, Stromquist, Palmquist and Lindwall. It is interesting to note that the last-named is still living in the colony, having recently celebrated his ninety-third birthday. Today very few would care to gather to flail grain, but in those days healthy young men welcomed every opportunity to get together, caring little if the work was hard so long as they had a chance to see one another and to enjoy themselves in helping someone. Incidentally, this trait of gathering to help one another was a marked characteristic of our people.

The year 1887 saw a great influx of settlers, the majority of whom came directly from Sweden, though others of Scandinavian birth or descent arrived from the United States. One day in May the Johanson family welcomed young Alex Stenberg and his wife Swea, who had been married in April in Stockholm, their native city. The ocean trip had been long and arduous, and seasickness had marred their honeymoon, but they had embarked on the trip with high spirits, for this was indeed the beginning of a great adventure. Accustomed to city streets, the couple found the rough winding trail from Whitewood very strange, and the young bride sometimes gazed with apprehension at the heavily wooded hills and the bluffs through which they passed. Alex carried a revolver and was prepared to protect his bride at any cost, for who knew what fierce animal might jump from the woods, while perhaps there might even be a band of warlike Indians. Years later he confessed with a grin that the only wild animals he saw were gophers. Though the May day was sunny, ice on the sloughs was of sufficient thickness to bear his weight. Always impetuous and athletic, he at times grew weary of sitting in the rig and would jump from it to run across the prairie and shoot the inquisitive little animals which kept bobbing from the ground. Never to be forgotten was the welcome given them by the Johansons, whose two young daughters, though years her juniors, became Swea Stenberg's companions and friends. This friendship, especially with the younger girl, Sara, continued throughout the years until Mrs. Stenberg's death in 1952.

The Stenberg's first house on their homestead was a small, one-roomed sod place, with a roof which leaked like a sieve. When rain fell during the night, it never disturbed Mr. Stenberg's slumber, for he continued to snore as the rain trickled down. This annoyed and



Alexander Stenberg



Svea Stenberg

exasperated his wife, who sat in bed under a dainty parasol brought from Sweden. Life in a sod house on the prairie often tested her courage, especially when she was alone. The long, lonely cry of the coyote at night, or the sudden appearance of Indians during the day, left indelible impressions on her mind. The Indians were never unfriendly, but stories of the Rebellion were still in the minds of the settlers. Language was a barrier, but friendly smiles and the sharing of food brought smiles and friendship in return. These visits might have had different results had it not been for the influence of Dr. MacKay, who was then doing a mighty work among the Indians at Round Lake. No human will ever know the influence he had on these proud, primitive people, but because of his persuasive voice and his daily example of Christian living, the Indians of Round Lake did not join the Rebellion. He was their teacher, their counsellor, and their friend.

No doubt Mrs. Stenberg was happy to leave the lonely homestead for a time and to live in Winnipeg, where the couple's first child was born in 1888. Alex Stenberg had obtained employment with the C.P.R. Immigration Department, and in Winnipeg he met two land agents, the Messrs' Hallonquist and Forslund. The latter was interested in the new Swedish colony and succeeded in attracting many newcomers to it. Upon his return to his homestead, Alex Stenberg assisted in placing these new settlers on the land. During all his years in the colony, Alex Stenberg was among the most active in all movements to improve living conditions, and also filled many

public offices. We find his name on the first board of Swea School, named in honour of his wife and opened in 1894. This log school, now sheathed with lumber, still stands and has served its district for sixty-two years. At every political meeting, Alex was to be found, very often presiding, and almost to the year of his death, at the age of eighty-six in 1950, he kept in close touch with the political leaders of both the province and the dominion. To have been for thirty-five years a highly respected Justice of the Peace is his enviable record.

In addition to their farming operations, the Stenbergs kept a small general store, a real boon to the people of the neighborhood, for here they could buy the necessities of life, and in busy times a trip to Whitewood was not one to be lightly undertaken. Later we shall read of their storekeeping activities in Stockholm, the village named to honor their birthplace. Mrs. Stenberg, throughout her life on the farm, was one who did her part nobly and well, through times of joy and days of sorrow. In her home genuine hospitality was found, and she delighted in sharing with others who were perhaps less fortunate. With no hospital or doctor within miles, many mothers called on her for help, and throughout the years she referred to many, with pride, as "my babies". Her worth as a fine and understanding neighbor and a capable nurse was recognized and appreciated in colony and village alike, and today she is remembered with great affection.

The Grimeau family in the Qu'Appelle Valley has always been closely connected with the life of the New Stockholm Colony and the district, and Margaret, a granddaughter of the Victor Grimeau and his wife who came here from Vaudi, France in 1886, married Edwin Anderson, son of a Swedish pioneer.

Victor Grimeau, with his wife and three daughters, reached Whitewood in the company of several other French families on April 10th, 1886. They were filled with high hope of quickly amassing a fortune, for the land agents had assured them that this was the golden west. The isolation of the land available for homesteads dismayed them, and many returned to France, but necessity compelled the Grimeaus to remain, for their total assets were only sixty dollars. With typical French cheeriness, they settled down to make a home in the strange land, though their first home was of sod, without a floor and with a roof which leaked with every rain and continued to drip long after the rain had ceased.

They suffered almost unbelievable hardships, but never lost their courage or their happy outlook on life. A marked characteristic of this family was their generosity and their readiness to share with others. Hard work and the thriftiness of the French eventually brought them success, and their only son, Victor Jr., carried on farm-

ing operations on their beautiful valley farm until a few years ago, when he and his wife retired to live in Lebret. A grandson, Joseph, successfully farms the same land and devotes considerable time to community work, being particularly active in the work of the Rural Municipality of Fertile Belt, of whose Council he is a member.

A member of the family, asked recently about home remedies used in the Grimeau home in the early days, replied, "They had none. Good clean water and faith in God kept them well". The fine old couple who came out from France to this district in its very earliest days are buried in the little cemetery in the valley, close beside Saint Luke's church.



Railway Ave. after 1942

## II.

1887

IN the spring of 1887, most of the settlers who were crowding into the New Stockholm colony came from Sweden, but Charles Sahlmark, with his wife Hannah Maria and their six children, was the first to come from the United States. He was a native of Vastergotland, Sweden, and his wife was born in Norway, but both had come to the State of Minnesota as children. Both were descendants of people who were always ready to embark on adventures, and their forefathers had sailed the seas, climbed mountains, crossed plains, and never failed to find a full, satisfying life.

Charles and his wife had pioneered in Minnesota, but they found the Canadian prairie a greater test of their courage and endurance. Here life was a constant struggle and each day exacted its toll from man, woman, child, and animal. All toiled to survive and to attain their goal, a comfortable home on a paying farm, with an education for each child. Their first few weeks were spent with the Nils Johansons and, as the weather was exceptionally fine, their own log house was soon ready for occupancy. In dry weather it was a comfortable home, but at night the sound of rain on the roof quickly roused the Sahlmark boys, who stumbled around in the darkness searching for dry places to move their beds.

The first acres on the homestead were broken with a walking plow and a yoke of oxen bought in Whitewood, and were cultivated with primitive hand-made harrows of birch and oak held together with wooden pegs, replaced some years later with pegs of iron. After the wheat was sown by hand, the land was harrowed a second time, a procedure which was followed on every farm and which entailed hours of labor. The winter feeding of oxen was a problem during the first year, when there was so much work to be done in such a short time. To cut the prairie hay with a scythe and then to rake it by hand, as many did, took many days of hard work and, after hauling it to the farm yard and stacking it, fences had to be built around the stacks, and fencing was no easy work. The Sahlmarks solved their fencing problems with their trusty axes and with logs brought from the hills. The logs were cut into rails, small trees were sharpened for use as stakes, and the fence was held together with long, straight willow shoots. Not a nickel had been spent, but the result

was a sturdy, picturesque fence, though the men who built it had to be accompanied by small boys bearing smudge pots, for the mosquitoes of the early days were larger, more numerous, and more bloodthirsty than those of today, and it was a brave man who went fencing without wearing a heavy veil.

Charles Sahlmark was a public-spirited man who worked diligently for the good of the community, especially during the very trying years when the settlers found their capital gone long before they could break sufficient land to produce paying crops. However, the people struggled to succeed, and in most cases they achieved their goal, though they lacked the governmental assistance we have today: the present family allowance cheques would indeed have been welcome as young parents struggled to provide for their large families of growing children. Charles and Hannah Maria's son, Alexander, was the first white child born in the colony and has some vivid recollections of his youthful days, for the boys of his generation shared in the work of men at an early age. The Sahlmark boys were tall and husky, and when Alex was fourteen he was working with a threshing crew, as a band cutter, and remembers the cold, frosty mornings when the soles and toes of his boots were too thin and worn for comfort.

The first log home of the Sahlmarks became too small for the growing family, and plans were made to build another on the homestead, which all agreed was one of the loveliest in the colony. Travelers on the highway can still see this farm, now the home of a son of the family, William, and his wife, the former Jean Watt. The



Home of the Charles Sahlmarks with Mrs. Sahlmark and son William



large, straight logs used to build the new house had been carefully selected, and hauling them from the valley to the top of the hill taxed the patience and strength of both man and beast. The actual building of the house was a challenge to the skill and strength of the builder, Charles Sahlmark, for with his own hands he peeled and squared these logs and did most of the construction. He has now been dead for many years, but the fine old house, now sheathed with lumber, is still a comfortable home, another example of the striking workmanship of the early builders of the colony. Family and friends honor the memory of this man who creditably filled so many public offices and who was the first Justice of the Peace in the district, a position he held until his death in 1915.

Home and mother: no Sahlmark can think of one without the other. She made their first humble log house a home, and the very plainest meals were served with a quiet, never-forgotten graciousness. Many a young housewife, struggling with some unaccustomed task, appreciated her assistance and kindly advice. The hills and the valleys were dear to her, but at times she was overcome with an intense longing for Norway, her homeland, and then, her family recall, she would pick up her knitting and, knitting as she walked, would climb the highest hill. As her longing eyes gazed over the valley, memory would recall the mountains and vales of Norway, the land of her own people.

Alex Sahlmark, son of Charles and Hannah Maria, was the first child born in the colony, and he received his early education at New Stockholm and Round Lake Mission schools, later attending high school in Fergus Falls, Minnesota. At the outbreak of the first World War, he enlisted in the 223rd Canadian Scandinavian Battalion, where he quickly obtained his commission, though in 1916 he reverted to the ranks in order to get overseas more quickly. After being wounded, he spent some time in hospital before returning to Canada in 1919. In October, 1932, he and Tekla Norman, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Norman, were married. They now live on their farm near Stockholm.

Alex has always been interested in politics and has been an active worker in all phases of community life. He was the capable reeve of the Rural Municipality of Fertile Belt for nine years, and has vivid memories of the depression years when he, with the other members of the council and Holger Munch, the secretary-treasurer, struggled with relief measures. He has assisted in the work of the P.F.R.A. and the P.F.A.A., and for twelve years was a member of the New Stockholm school board, while for twenty-eight years he was president of the Stockholm Rural Telephone Company.

The lure of free land in the Canadian west, more particularly the land available for homesteading in the recently surveyed district



A. G. Sahlmark



Mrs. Sahlmark

reserved for Scandinavian settlers, induced Anders Gustaf Sahlmark to sell his farm in Minnesota and, with his wife Kate, their seven children, and a carload of settlers' effects, set out for Canada. It was an October day in 1887 when they reached Whitewood enroute to the colony and the home of A. G.'s brother, Charles, where they spent the next few weeks. Later they moved into a house rented from Eric Soderberg, a homesteader of 1886 who returned to Sweden for a visit.

A. G. Sahlmark arrived with considerable farming equipment, including four horses and the first binder in the colony, which was used for several years to cut all the grain grown in the district. He and Mrs. Sahlmark brought furniture for their home and sufficient money to allow them to begin homesteading under very favorable circumstances. They located a homestead and secured a pre-emption, then carefully selected the site for their home, one which gave them a wonderful view of the Qu'Appelle valley and the hills beyond.

Building "bees" were much in vogue, and all the young men would gather to assist the newest neighbor. Among the most popular men in the district were the Messrs. Lindwall, Lindgren, Stromquist and Palmquist, who were always present at these "bees", and it was these four who did the major part in building the Sahlmark house, one which soon became known as a home where there was always leisure for the sharing of a gracious hospitality. In those days, when necessity forced so many of the women to share in practically every

type of farm work, Mrs. A. G. Sahlmark was fortunate enough to be able to devote most of her time to her home and family, and later to the women's organizations of the New Stockholm Lutheran Church.

A. G. Sahlmark was an active worker in every community project, serving on church and school boards and in the various clubs which flourished from time to time in the colony. The Sahlmark brothers, A. G. and Charles, with the experience in civic affairs which they had gained in Minnesota, were of great assistance in formulating the policies of these clubs.

When New Stockholm School was in readiness, the ratepayers requested the Department of Education to permit Selma Sahlmark, the oldest child of this family, to teach, and this request was granted. She was young and inexperienced and had no formal training, but nevertheless she proved a success as a teacher who not only taught the prescribed subjects but also instilled in her pupils a love of learning. Selma Sahlmark later became the bride of the Reverend Hugh MacKay, who in 1884 had arrived at Round Lake to begin his long years of unselfish work with the Indians. She shared her husband's enthusiasm for this work, and it is impossible to measure her wonderful influence on the lives of the Indian children who lived in this residential school. She possessed tact and infinite patience, two desirable qualities for dealing with children who were experiencing for the first time the white man's way of life. Many of the children were eager to learn, while others were indifferent, but all benefited from their contact with Mrs. MacKay. The true worth of the MacKays is known far beyond the confines of the district they served so faithfully and so well. Centuries ago a Greek statesman and historian wrote: "The whole earth is the tomb of heroic men and their story is not graven only on the stones over their clay, but abides everywhere without visible symbol, woven into the stuff of other men's lives". So it might be written of the MacKays, neither of whom needs words of praise graven on stone or cairn to praise their work, for the lives of countless men and women bear witness to its worth.

William, the eldest son of this Sahlmark family, also taught in the New Stockholm School and, like his sister, left a lasting impression on his pupils. One of his school inspectors, who was also a leader of a city choir, remarked after listening to the children sing, "Sahlmark, I have never listened to lovelier singing in any country school". Early in his life, William Sahlmark decided to become a doctor, and he allowed nothing to prevent the realization of his youthful ambition. He had seen his father's neighbors suffer through lack of medical care, when doctors were all too few and too far away. So he taught school at New Stockholm from May to September, then attended the University in Winnipeg during the winters.

Graduating from medical college with high honors, he began a long and very successful medical practice in Saltcoats. Political life also



**Dr. G. W. Salmhark; M.L.A.,  
for constituency of Saltcoats, 1918**

appealed to him, and for twelve years he represented the Saltcoats constituency in the Legislative Assembly at Regina. During all these years he was assisted and encouraged by his wife, the former Clara Boyle of Edmonton. Their family of two girls became internationally known in musical circles.

Other members of the family of A. G. Shalmark, of Vastergotland, and his wife, of Varmland, Sweden, contributed to the life of the community, but the eldest son and daughter are excellent examples of the fine type of citizens who grew up in this pioneer district of the Canadian west.

To insure the steady growth of the new colony, it was necessary

to maintain a constant flow of settlers, and Emanuel Ohlen, the land agent, seized every opportunity to interview Scandinavian immigrants upon their arrival in Winnipeg. Some of them were enroute to points in the United States, and the persuasive words of the agent failed to alter their plans. However, when he discovered that several members of one newly arrived group had relatives in the colony, he offered to pay their travelling expenses to the colony for a visit. They were exceedingly weary after weeks of travelling, so gladly accepted his offer. Thus it was that, on a sunny July day in 1887, eleven adults and four children arrived at the Nils Johanson home, among them the Stromberg, Stromgren, and Berg families. Mrs. Johanson was so accustomed to unexpected visitors that these fifteen hungry people did not upset her pleasant, hospitable manner as, amidst the sound of carefree laughter and happy voices relating news of the homeland, she prepared a meal. A long table was placed in a shady spot beneath the trees, and soon the guests, who for over a month had hungered for home-cooked meals, were sitting down to steaming bowls of Swedish porridge, made by stirring flour into gently simmering milk, then served with a generous lump of butter and creamy milk. Just as the astute agent had anticipated, these immigrants were so delighted with the colony that they decided to



Stone buildings on farm of Carl Stendahl

stay, and quickly located homesteads.

The three families spent the first weeks in a log house on the Bergman homestead, but before spring each had a log house on his own homestead. E. A. Berg of Strom, Sweden, was probably the first skilled craftsman to homestead in the colony: he was a stonemason who took great pride in his work. Substantial and comfortable log houses could be built more quickly than those of stone, however, and so the Berg's first home was built of logs. Seventy years later it is now the comfortable home of E. A. Berg's eldest son, Emmanuel, and his family. This house has welcomed many people, and various gatherings, both sad and gay, have been held within its walls, but all who crossed its threshold received the characteristic warm hospitality of the Berg family. Confirmation classes were held here, with some of the members walking and others driving six or seven miles in ox-drawn wagons. Visiting Lutheran ministers were welcomed here and before the church was built it was the gathering place for Sunday services.

Classes in Swedish for the children of the district were also held in this home, conducted by various local people until 1893, when Nils Nilson, a qualified teacher, arrived from Sweden. He was engaged by the parents of the young students to teach during the months between October and May, when the public schools were closed, and for many years Nils Nilson was a familiar figure in the

district as he journeyed from his home on the Berglund farm, very often carrying his portable organ. Later he moved to the Pervical district, where he homesteaded. Some may wonder why there was a demand for the services of a Swedish teacher in an English-speaking country, but at this period the people were intent on making this part of Canada a replica of their homeland. They appreciated the opportunities to achieve higher standards of living, and many were thankful to be free from compulsory military service, but few had much knowledge of their adopted country. A large picture of the King of Sweden hung on the walls of most kitchens or parlours, and the Swedish flag was flown on all gala occasions. The opening of the public schools, however, brought a gradual change in the attitude of the people toward this country, and no district of the Northwest Territories was ever settled by a better class of people than these sturdy, thrifty, law-abiding and freedom-loving Swedes.

Very few of the early settlers had sufficient funds to provide for their needs until they could harvest and market their first crop, so the building boom in Whitewood was welcomed by E. A. Berg and other homesteaders in the colony. There are still many fine examples of Mr. Berg's excellent workmanship in existence, two in particular being the beautiful Anglican church in Whitewood and the large stone house on the farm of Carl Stendahl at Bird's Point, Round Lake, formerly the home of Dr. Bird and his brother, of Whitewood.

The Bergs were loyal workers in the New Stockholm Lutheran Church. Its first faithful caretaker was E. A. Berg, and its first organist was his daughter Anna, who held the position from 1899-1906. Long before the days when people felt that to be fashionable they must have an organ in the parlour, the Bergs had one, and when Mr. Berg went to work in Whitewood he took his little daughter with him so that she might have music lessons. Their organ was taken to the church for special services, until the energetic Ladies Aid of the church made sufficient money to purchase an organ and present it to the congregation. The choir of this church was early recognized as one with many beautiful voices, and among its members were the Bergs. Christina Berg came from a family of unusually fine singers, and her mother, Anna Brita Swenson, the Swedish widow whose large family assisted in the development of the colony, had a voice of striking beauty. It is told of her that in the later years of her life she would walk to the church from her home nearby, well before the hour of service, and, taking her place in her pew, would begin very quietly singing some old favorite hymn, quite oblivious to the filling pews. Occasionally her daughters took their places beside her and often, before the regular hour of worship, the entire congregation had joined Anna Brita Swenson in her hymns of praise.

Life in the Berg home could be considered typical of all the families in the colony. Mothers of families were rarely idle, and Mrs. Berg, with her family of seven, was often thankful she had brought her spinning wheel and hand-operated sewing machine from Sweden. She spun the wool for knitting, and the children's clothing and shoes were made at home. Many kitchen utensils were carved from the native woods, and during the long winter evenings were whittled into shape by the flickering light of a wood fire and a coal-oil lamp. Family life was centered in the pioneer kitchens, where all shared in the daily tasks and the simple pleasures, and never did life seem so complete as when all were gathered within its walls. In many homes, reading aloud was a pleasant custom and, since there were very few books in the district, these were passed from home to home. Through the efforts of Lady Aberdeen, wife of the Governor General of Canada, large parcels of magazines reached the colony at frequent intervals. These were never merely read and then carelessly destroyed, but later made their appearance as wallpaper in the kitchens of the district. As such, they not only covered all the cracks, but also provided lively topics for conversation. One of the pioneers recalls with a smile her acrobatic but futile efforts to re-read an interesting story which appeared upside down on the kitchen wall.

The Bergs, like their neighbors, knew many times of bitter disappointment. There were the dry years, especially during the nineties, when the fields sown with such high hopes yielded very little more than the seed sown. Gophers moved in on the crops, and people viewed with alarm the depredations of these hitherto almost unnoticed animals. In 1901, at the fifth annual meeting of the Local Improvement District, the farmers made their first request for money to buy gopher poison or traps. But the good years inevitably followed the poor, and the farmers ceased to be wholly dependent on grain farming as each man, as his finances permitted, purchased stock, realizing the suitability of this district for mixed farming. The years have proved this to be one of the best mixed-farming areas in the province. During all these years there was a feeling of hopeful expectancy among the people, and disappointments were quickly forgotten as each pressed forward toward his goal and eventually achieved a satisfying share of material wealth. The years have seen the gradual passing of these pioneers. In 1934, the fine old stonemason, E. A. Berg, so much of whose work still stands, died and was buried beside the church he served. In 1942 his faithful helpmate, Christina, was buried beside him.

The three families, Bergs, Stromgrens, and Strombergs, who arrived in the colony on the twenty-fourth of July, 1887, brought with them very little beside their clothing and the family bedding. Sara

Stromgren Fredlund still remembers how carefully her mother packed among the bedclothes a precious guitar and four small wooden bowls. However, these families had sufficient money to purchase the necessary household furnishings as well as oxen. Reverend Hugh MacKay recognized the sterling qualities of these new settlers and was always ready to assist them in the somewhat difficult task of adjustment to an unfamiliar way of life. The men of these families gratefully accepted his offer to teach them English. They were actively interested in the development and welfare of the colony, and the Strombergs and Stromgrens were charter members of the Swedish Mission Covenant Church. Sven Stromberg was its first treasurer and Paul Stromgren served as a deacon. Their social life centered around the church, and their simple faith sustained them through the difficulties of those early years.

During the winter there was much neighborly visiting as, wrapped in their warmest clothing, young and old alike would walk across the snowy fields to visit a neighbor. The adults talked, while games kept the children reasonably quiet, and occasionally the young men sought to impress the young ladies with exhibitions of feats of strength. Everyone remained for supper, and each Swedish housewife took pride in setting a bountiful table. Goodbyes were never said until all had joined in the singing of hymns and old Swedish songs. And on the long snowbound evenings, the families were seldom idle. The women spun wool for the heavy socks which they knit for the entire family, did the sewing, helped make the children's shoes, and did the usual household tasks, while the men industriously carved and whittled in their particular corner of the kitchen. Thoughts of spring often filled their minds, and they longed for the days when suddenly the valley, the hills and the prairie would burst into breathtaking beauty, with the winds carrying the perfume of wild fruit trees in bloom, and when, half hidden in the prairie grass, flowers hitherto unknown to them, would blossom forth.

Paulus Stromgren and his wife, the former Golin Svenson, who were natives of Strom, Sweden, had seven children, and David, one of their sons, is the present owner of their old homestead. Sven Stromberg and his wife, with their three children, were getting well established on the homestead when, in March of 1890, Sven died after a brief illness. His was the first burial in the recently consecrated cemetery of the Swedish Mission Church. Sara Stromberg was a capable woman and with the assistance of her brother-in-law, O. E. Lindgren, continued to farm. Eric, her oldest son, has many memories of those days on the farm, one in particular being of an early-morning church service on a Christmas day long ago. His mother awakened her family very early in the morning and, after the typical Swedish Christmas breakfast of porridge, thin bread, and



cheese, bundled them in many wraps and placed them on a stone-boat drawn by an ox. Then away they went over the winding trail to join their neighbors in this early hour of worship, as gleaming lights shone forth like beacons to guide all to the six o'clock service. The people came from all directions, many walking and others in homemade conveyances drawn by oxen, but all filled with the desire to celebrate the birth of Christ. Christmas was primarily a holy day and after this service the worshippers returned to their homes, where they had the "big breakfast" and took care of the morning chores before gathering for the next service at eleven. The following day found everyone in a gay holiday mood as they gathered to enjoy a concert of sacred music and a hearty lunch. Here they made plans for visiting during the holidays, which lasted until after New Year's Day.

Some of the settlers made their own boats and spent many happy and profitable hours in them as they fished in the Qu'Appelle River and in Round Lake. Fish were very plentiful and could be caught with the simplest of tackle. Some people made nets, and the one Jens Olson made of shoemaker's thread caught many fine fish for the Olsons, who came from Strom, Sweden to Whitewood in July, 1889 and moved to their homestead in 1893. Several years after their arrival, when Andrew, one of the sons, was about fifteen years old and was working for the Eric Eriksons who farmed in the valley, he saw two men from Percival take such staggering quantities of fish from Round Lake as filled his mind with wonder at the greed of men. They came with a team and wagon to the lake, which was covered with about two inches of ice. Their wagon box was soon filled and enough fish lay on the ground to fill another box, so they borrowed a wagon and team from the Eriksons, who sent Andrew with the fishermen to bring the outfit home. To refuse this help never occurred to the Eriksons; no payment was offered and none was expected. Practically everyone displayed a similar neighborly spirit.

Ingle Kasper Inglebretson, the first Norwegian to homestead in the colony, is one who is still well remembered for his fine neighborly qualities. He and his wife, Gurina, with their children, arrived in the spring of 1887. They were hard working folk, and soon had a comfortable log house built on their farm, where many new settlers found shelter while their own houses were being built. Some of his land was rather hilly—indeed the highest point of land in the colony is known as Kasper's Hill—and, as this land dried early in the spring, the Swedes always saw their Norwegian neighbor out seeding before their own land was ready to be worked. Both Kasper and his wife delighted in sharing with others, so when one of the first self-binders in the district was purchased by the Ingbre-

sons, the entire neighborhood was interested. This binder and the one bought by Nils Johanson cut much of the grain in the colony for a period of many years. The Ingbretons eventually sold their homestead and moved to the Atwater district; their old homestead is now owned by the Landines.

Not all who filed on the land in 1887 remained after the completion of their homestead duties, and with the lapse of years many are almost forgotten, but all who came and cultivated the land were public benefactors. Two who left shortly after they received their land titles were Nils Arvidson and Emmanuel Lindquist. Their farms were bought by Jonas Johanson, while Alex Stenberg bought the homestead of the Frans Englebergs, who returned to Sweden. One young man who filed on his land and remained now looks back over a long and useful life spent in the colony which he so ably helped to develop into the fine, prosperous community it is today. Z. E. Lindwall, with his late wife, the former Carolina Johanson, and their family, is so closely linked with every phase of life in the colony that it would be difficult to name any community project without mentioning some of them. In company with his brothers and cousins from Sweden, he left the colony to seek work in Manitoba to earn enough money to live on while improving the homestead. He was a tall, husky, personable young man and never had difficulty in securing employment and, though wages were low, so were living expenses, and he managed to save money. He and his companions preferred contract work, and at one time they worked in the vicinity of Winnipeg cutting railroad ties for seven cents a tie.

Whitewood was the closest market town for the people in the colony, and the road to it was only a rough winding trail. Everyone who had to travel it was anxious to see it improved, but it was largely through the efforts of a few tireless young men, who went to work with little more than their own hands, and of course their trusty axes, that the first roads were made. Wherever possible, the higher hills were avoided, but it was strenuous work to fell the large trees, remove the stumps, and fill in the holes. The road they made was used by those from the north as well as those in the colony, but few besides their neighbors realized that the road was there only because of hours of back-breaking, unpaid labour by these Swedish farmers.

During these early years many meetings were held, and the people discussed the seeming indifference of the government to the appalling lack of roads and its refusal to give any financial assistance towards building a new one or improving the old. However, in 1892 the first government grant for the building of a road was received, amounting to five hundred dollars. This money was used for a road through the long ravine, known locally as the Indian ravine. Z. E.

Lindwall was the road foreman, and roadmakers of today would marvel at the equipment this road gang assembled. It consisted of a yoke of oxen, two teams of horses, a plow, and two road scrapers, plus the axes without which the average Swede would attempt few tasks. These men cut down the trees, cleared away the underbrush, made cuts in the hills, and built a wooden bridge. When the job was completed, it was inspected by the Honorable F. W. G. Haultain, whose department was responsible for this work in the Territories. Mr. Lindwall recalls with justifiable pride the comment he made: "I have never seen so much excellent work done for so little money". In 1897, at a meeting of the Statute Labor and Fire District Number 104, certain land taxes were levied and earmarked for the building and upkeep of roads. These taxes amounted to two dollars per quarter section of land and could be paid either in cash or by two days of road work. For some years the practice of doing road work was followed, and the burden of maintaining roads fell on all rather than a few.

These were busy times in the colony, with Z. E. Lindwall, his brothers, Eric Palmquist and O. E. Lindgren, and their cousin Zacharias Stromquist playing active parts in its development. Stromquist married Gunilla Johanson and moved to the United States in 1913. In 1920, Lindgren and his wife, the former Hilma Carlson, moved to British Columbia; his homestead is owned by his nephew, Hugo Olson. Erik Palmquist married Anna Zakrisson in 1889 and, several years later, moved to British Columbia.

The fourth member of their group, Z. E. Lindwall, was married in 1892 to Carolina Johanson by the pastor of the Mission Covenant Church, C. O. Hofstrand. The home established by the Lindwalls in 1892 was one which exerted a wonderful influence in the colony. The Lindwalls were members of the Mission Church and closely connected with all its works, serving it zealously. Every local and visiting minister found spiritual and bodily refreshment in this home. All they did, either for their church or for anyone in need, was done so simply and quietly that few ever realized how much the church and the community owed to this family.

Carolina Lindwall grew up in a home noted for its hospitality. In it she had seen her mother make room at the long family table for countless weary travellers, and she carried into her own home a similar spirit of generous hospitality. Even a chance caller would scarcely be seated before Mrs. Lindwall appeared with the coffee pot. One of the best cooks in the colony, the meals she served were long remembered. This home was always a popular meeting place for the young people, but was especially so in the early days when skiing was enjoyed on the adjacent hills. A hearty lunch and a happy singsong always ended these skiing parties. Perhaps the

highlight of the year, for Mr. and Mrs. Lindwall, was the family dinner party on Christmas Eve, when their sons and daughters and their families gathered in the old home. The memories of these happy gatherings are something the Lindwall family will always treasure. Mr. Lindwall, at the age of ninety-three, is still enjoying life and continues his keen interest in world and local happenings, but in Saskatchewan's Golden Jubilee year of 1955 the entire district mourned the death of his gentle, kindly wife, Carolina.



Log and Sod house, Picnic July 1, 1887; same house a few years later



### III.

## 1888

THE year 1888 was one of feverish activity in the colony, as land seekers arrived almost constantly and log homes appeared on many quarter sections of land. Erick Jonson Wickberg of Renanen, Jamtland, Sweden, with his wife and three small children, arrived in Whitewood on the first of May. The voyage in a former cattle boat had been long and trying, but they were hardy, courageous folk and, with twenty-five cents in the family wallet and a few precious possessions from the old home, they faced the future with confidence. They spent the next few months with the E. A. Bergs, who were relatives, and two months after their arrival their fourth child was born.

Erick Wickberg took work when and where it was available, and once walked to Brandon before securing employment. Wages were very low and it was necessary to save every nickel so that farm equipment could be purchased, so Erick spent every spare moment of that first summer working on his log house. On one occasion he left the house, which he had completed to the window sills, and on returning a few weeks later found nothing but blackened ruins, victim of one of the prairie fires which frequently swept down from the unsettled country to the north. It took courage to begin rebuilding. During the late autumn, when the young men of the colony returned to their homesteads, log houses were quickly erected, but there were no building bees in the summer. There was, therefore, great rejoicing when the Wickbergs were able to move into their new home. With a few pieces of new furniture, and the old spinning wheel and hand sewing machine brought from Sweden, life took on a new meaning. The Wickbergs sang as easily and as naturally as others breathed, and every task in this home was lightened with the singing of old familiar hymns and songs. Mrs. Wickberg was for many years the choir leader in the New Stockholm Church, and the names of the family appear on the great roll of charter members of this church.

The lack of a plentiful supply of water was a hardship experienced by some homesteaders. Those living near a ravine could get an abundance of excellent water from wells only eight or nine feet deep, but on the level prairie it was necessary to dig many feet and,

with the primitive equipment available, this was a long and arduous task. Mrs. Wickberg carried many pails of water from the Stromberg farm, a distance of a mile or more. But the prairie housewife also made great use of sloughs and, with typical Swedish ingenuity the women of the colony carried the family washing to the water rather than the water to the washing. They chose a clear, sunny day, preferably with a good stiff breeze to ward off the fiendish attacks of the mosquitos, and dipped the clothes in the slough, rubbed them well with homemade soap, and pounded them vigorously with handmade wooden paddles. The work always proceeded merrily: dip, rub, pound, rinse and wring, until the clothes were finally spread on the grass to dry. How clean and fragrant were these clothes, slough-washed and dried on the grass.

In the early days, everyone worked but there was always time for wholesome fun. The great sloughs, in winter, became the skaters' paradise. The lack of skates was a hardship to some, but not to the Wickbergs, for with the eager eyes of his children upon him Erick Wickberg whittled and shaped blocks of wood into skates and then fitted them with blades made from sharpened pieces of iron. As quickly as these could be strapped to shoes, a Wickberg was on the ice.

The very practical Swedish women in the colony played important roles in its building. Babies were born in the homes, and the mothers were attended by kindly neighbors, with Mrs. Wickberg being one who was ever ready to nurse a neighbor. These women accomplished a great deal of work in a single day, and they did it with very few kitchen aids. Their floors were not tiled and waxed, but the wood was scrubbed to a gleaming satiny whiteness with homemade soft soap. The wives were adept at cheese-making, and cheese to delight the taste of a gourmet appeared on their tables. Hard work and thriftiness brought prosperity to the Wickbergs, and the greatest ambition, a comfortable home on debt-free land, was realized.

One month after the Wickberg family set sail, Ingle Peter Sjodin of Westerbottem, Sweden, with his wife and two children, started the long trip to Canada, arriving in Whitewood on June 26th. Many years later his son, Erick, married a daughter of the Wickbergs. A homestead was soon located and, while their house was being built, the family stayed with the Nils Johansons. After a house, the homesteader's next requisite was a yoke of oxen and a plow. Mr. Sjodin paid one hundred and fifty dollars for a well-broken yoke of oxen, which he purchased in Moosomin, walking every step of the way to get them. People of today will walk when all other means of traveling fail, but the hardy pioneers walked for pleasure as well as from necessity.

Building a home, clearing and breaking land and, when the wallet was empty, seeking work outside the settlement, left Ingle Sjodin with few idle hours. The average pay for a day's work was seventy-five cents, so it required hard work and very careful management to get established. The Sjodins were just getting on their feet, and looking to the future with confidence when, eight years after their arrival, Mrs. Sjodin died, leaving four children and a husband who still had to seek work outside the settlement to supplement the family income. The baby of the family was cared for by a neighbor and Erick, the eldest child, though only eleven years old, took charge of the household while his father worked at Whitewood. Assisted by his sister, aged eight, he cared for his young brother, milked cows, looked after the poultry, and cooked the meals. Once a week, the anxious father walked home to assist and encourage his little family.

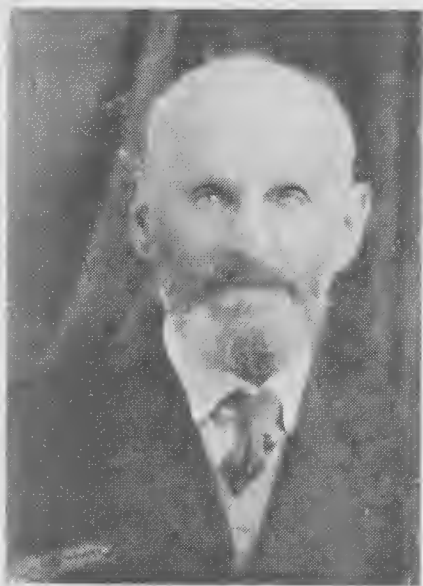
Despite their many trials and bitter disappointments, this family succeeded and contributed much to the development of the country. Erick, who at such an early age had shouldered the responsibilities of homemaking, later pioneered on a homestead in the southern part of the province. While there he married Esther Wickberg and later returned to the colony, where he purchased the farm formerly owned by Mrs. Sjodin's parents, the Erick Jonson Wickbergs.

The earliest settlers, with few exceptions, experienced hardships and privations with few complaints, but with a steady influx of new families a different spirit began to be evident and the government was reminded more frequently of its responsibilities. Emanuel Ohlen, the indefatigable land agent, made frequent trips to the colony to encourage and sometimes to admonish the people. Occasionally he was accompanied by other officials of the government, who began to be aware of the spirit of restiveness which prevailed.

Before the close of the year 1888, the colony was the home of thirty additional families, among them twenty who filed on homesteads. These pioneers toiled and endured hardships, but very few regretted coming to the new western country. Many were active in all community projects, and the names of the E. A. Jonsons, Olaf Teng, J. Teng, P. A. Norlin, J. P. Norden, J. A. Westin, E. Hammerstrom, who married Marta Hogleund in 1892, and E. Christofferson, all from northern Sweden, appear frequently in the old records. A Dane, whose surname was Bang, arrived that year and was hired by the government to return to Denmark to interest more people in the Swedish colony. He went to Denmark, but the colony never saw him again.

Another Dane, who came and remained, was Axel von Holstein Rathlou. Accompanied by his young wife, he left his ancestral home to become a prairie farmer. His family traced their ancestry back

to the years between 1000 and 1100, and many of them had recruited from their own servants companies of soldiers to fight for their king and country. In the war of 1848 with Germany Axel's father, Vigg von Holstein Rathlou, received Denmark's highest military award for saving the life of the Danish Crown Prince. Axel von Holstein Rathlou was an unpretentious gentleman, as big of heart as he was of stature. He was ever thoughtful of another's need, and there were many settlers who benefited from this genial Dane's generosity. Only the recipients were aware of these many generous acts, and it has been a pleasure to hear words of appreciation spoken by the sons and daughters of his former neighbors.



**Axel von Holstein Rathlou**

Some time after their arrival a daughter was born to this family, and shortly afterwards Mrs von Holstein Rathlou's sister joined them, remaining a member of the family until her death in 1905. Axel von Holstein Rathlou soon became known to the colony as Axel Holstein, and was a very active member of the Scandinavian colony club, as well as an ardent supporter of any movement which tended to improve the district. It is true that many of the other members held offices, but behind them stood Axel Holstein, whose clear grasp of the many problems requiring attention was an invaluable aid to these men, many of whom had had practically no

experience in public affairs. They may have lacked experience, but they certainly had confidence and invariably left these club meetings ready to face any problem which might confront them.

Shortly after his arrival Axel was appointed a Danish land agent and was to return to Denmark to endeavour to interest prospective immigrants in coming to Canada. It was not until 1893, however, that he was free to make this trip, for the intervening years had been so filled with activity that a trip abroad could not be considered. During this time his young wife had died, so when he went to Denmark he left his little daughter with her aunt, who was now the family housekeeper.

Some months were spent in Denmark, and he succeeded in interesting a few prospective settlers. He also met a young lady who



was his mother's house guest, and almost at once attempted to interest her in the faraway Swedish colony and, more particularly, in the colony's representative, Axel von Holstein Rathlou. However, Elizabeth Schuldt, the rather pampered eighteen-year-old daughter of the Schuldts of Parachein, Micklenberg, did not consider this proposal with much favour, for her present life was as happy as she could wish, and surely the years would see many of her dearest dreams fulfilled. But love prevailed and on March 20th, 1894, she and Axel were married in a beautiful old church on the von Holstein Rathlou estate. Sometimes, in the years which followed, Elizabeth, now the mistress of a log house on a prairie farm, told her children the story of her wedding day. The description of her formal white gown, with its long train, the misty veil, the beautiful flowers and the six bridal attendants, never failed to thrill the three young daughters, but the sons were always more interested in the description of the carriage, with its spirited horses and liveried coachman and attendants, in which their mother and father had travelled to the church and which, following the ceremony, had carried them to the von Holstein Rathlou home.

The couple left for Canada shortly after their marriage, accompanied by a few Danes intent on becoming prairie farmers. The formal dinner they attended at the home of a Swedish immigration officer in Winnipeg, who entertained in their honor, was the couple's last formal social function for many, many years. They arrived in Whitewood on a sunny April day, to find that spring had come early to the prairies and that seeding was in progress. Elizabeth found a comfortable home on the farm, with an experienced housekeeper, so was spared many of the hardships which other women from the old lands had encountered. It was, however, a painful contrast to her old home and she, like these others, suffered the keen pangs of homesickness. There were times when the longing for the companionship of friends or for the solace of books and music swept over her and the days were saddened with nostalgic memories. But she possessed courage, a fine sense of humor and a natural gaiety of spirit, and quickly adapted herself to this new life.

In this she was helped, encouraged, and cheered by a woman who was to become her lifelong and dearest friend, Svea Stenberg, who had come here in 1887, also as an eighteen-year-old bride from the city, and who had also wept many bitter tears of loneliness. The friendship of these two fine women never wavered, but became ever firmer with the years, while their respective families grew up together and shared each other's joys and sorrows. It is interesting to note that the Stenberg-Holstein friendship is continuing into the third generation.

The Holsteins welcomed many different types of people into their

home, some who dropped in for a day or so staying for weeks. Home-sick Danes found this place a haven, but nationality seemed to matter little, for one French gentleman was so delighted with the companionship of the family that he asked if he might return as a paying guest. In this day of expensive living, one is amazed at the charge the Holsteins more or less reluctantly made: eight dollars for the gentleman's room and board, the stabling and feed for his hunter, and food for his three beautiful Russian wolf hounds.

Game was very plentiful and there were no hunting restrictions, but the hunters from the Holstein household had the true sportsman's repugnance for senseless slaughter of wild life. Being a keen hunter, Axel Holstein loved the days he could tramp the prairies with a gun. He saw the winding trails become roads, built for the most part through the labour of his neighbors and himself. These roads marked a new stage in the colony's development, and the fences now beginning to appear, first around the little stacks of hay and later around the homesteads, gave the country an air of permanence: the people were here to stay. These years exacted a heavy toll, and many men and women became old before their time, but there were many compensations and no one can say that they did not enjoy life.

The Holsteins were interested in all the children around them, but naturally the welfare of their own family was a matter of great concern to them, and they were determined that their sons and daughters must grow up with a taste for the worthwhile things of life and with a strong desire to possess them. The children were never so happy as when their parents joined them in their play, and many were the lessons in geography, history and literature taught them under the guise of games. Christmas was a very happy time and, for days before, the fragrance of Danish and German cookies and pastries filled the Holstein kitchen. The cookies were cut into a variety of fancy shapes and were used to decorate the Christmas tree, along with striped candy canes, brightly colored paper garlands cut out by the children, the golden oranges which were their only Christmas treats, and of course the candles. In the early years, the tree would be a shapely little poplar, but never could even the loveliest of Christmas trees bring more joy to the heart of a child than those trees, cut from a home bluff and decorated by loving hands, brought to the Holstein girls and boys. Christmas Eve was a time of gaiety, when all joined hands and danced around the tree; the gifts were opened, and the evening was made complete with the singing of "Silent Night, Holy Night". Christmas day usually brought many visitors, who came in the morning and spent the day.

For many years Axel Holstein travelled countless miles to assist farmers with ailing stock. He was never known to refuse a call

for help and the farmers, who could ill afford to lose any animal, had reason to thank him. Before emigrating to Canada, he had made a study of farming and the care of animals, to better fit himself for his new venture in life. His success and skill as a veterinarian was finally recognized by the authorities, but the farmers had long realized his skill with livestock and come to rely upon him. When their circumstances permitted, some remembered to reimburse this kindly man for his services, but no one can hazard a guess as to the miles he travelled or the number of livestock he saved. Axel Holstein never counted the cost to himself if a neighbor called for help, and continued his work even after he and his family had moved to the village of Stockholm.

The Swedish colony has never lacked colorful characters, and among them was Sven Svedberg. He arrived in 1888, with his parents, Erik and Karen Zakrison, and seven brothers and a sister. The long voyage had been unusually rough, and everyone had been seasick. Sven was the oldest of the family and, according to his written account of the voyage, he assisted in caring for the younger members of the family. But he, too, was sick and his chief nourishment between ports consisted of sips of cognac. Several of their relatives, including a sister and brother, had arrived in 1886 and 1887, so there was a happy reunion, after which they spent their first weeks with the Nils Johansons, Sven's uncle and aunt.

Sven's parents had twelve children, eleven of whom settled in the colony. This family came with enough money to purchase a yoke of oxen, a cow or two, the necessary household equipment, and what were probably the first blacksmith tools in the colony. The homesteads selected were about eighteen miles from Whitewood, and some apprehension was felt about the future. However, a railway company had made a survey through the valley and the settlers had expectations of a town closer to them within a short time. But gradually their hopes faded, and many weary trips were made to Whitewood before the coming of the C.P.R. and the village of Stockholm. In those trying years, petition followed petition, each requesting the government to urge the railroad company to recognize the plight of these homesteaders and build the line. The petitions were in vain for, then as now, railroads were built not so much where the need seemed greatest as where the financial returns seemed to warrant.

As soon as the Zakrisons were settled, Sven and one of his brothers, with their cousin, Z. E. Lindwall, left to seek employment in the Brandon district. Their wallets were practically empty, so even the cheapest lodgings were beyond their reach and the C.P.R. station became their headquarters while they searched for work. One day a farmer hired Sven for a month, offering him fifteen dollars, which

seemed a sizeable sum. The work proved light and his bachelor employer was an affable man, but Sven suffered from the misery of homesickness, and the month seemed interminable. Language was a barrier to companionship, so the Swedish-English dictionary was studied in every spare moment, with Sven feeling pleased with his progress. One day the farmer remarked on the hot weather and the young Swede searched vainly for a moment for a suitable reply. Then, with face aglow with pride and pleasure, he said "Hot hell". Years later he wrote, "I did not mean anything bad, but I could see my expression did not please him, and when I think of it I appreciate him all the more, because he did not encourage me in such expressions". The month over, the three young cousins met again in Brandon and obtained work with a contractor, whose misfortune in having a log boom break while floating it down the river enabled them to earn considerable money. One dollar a day and board seemed like a fortune, and they were happy as they worked down the river, gathering the logs. These lads invariably tried to get contract work, for they were young and strong and could work long hours. The first mention of the Scandinavian Mission Church in Winnipeg occurs in Sven's journal, when he related, "We attended church and the people were so kind".

Work on the Zakrison and Svedberg homesteads was showing progress, and when Sven returned he found five acres had been broken on his farm. He built a small house, with a roof which leaked. Being a very truthful man, he wrote, "This was just a place to sleep in so I could prove up my homestead, I really lived with my parents". A little barn was built to stable the oxen which, he said, he bought on time and later lost when their former owner came into the field where Sven was working and unhitched them from the plow. Nothing ever daunted this stout-hearted Swede, who made money and lost money: he was ambitious, and each financial reverse served but to spur him on to something even bigger and better. He was an opportunist and an optimist, and eventually retired to the city of Victoria, where he lived a life of comfort until his death a few years ago. The members of the Zakrison family all prospered and today their descendants are worthy citizens of Canada and the United States, but in writing of the early years when the resources of his family were practically exhausted, Sven paid tribute to the culinary skill of his mother and sisters, who produced tempting meals from the plainest foods, but added, "True we didn't go hungry but often we did eat more rabbit than we liked".

Between the years 1887 and 1890, the wheat acreage was steadily increasing and each year it was more of a problem to get the grain to Whitewood or to the grist mill at Millwood. A good yoke of oxen could haul a load of about forty bushels, but if the roads were icy

they had great difficulty in climbing the hills. Indeed, on more than one occasion Sven, like his neighbors, carried the two-bushel bags of wheat on his shoulders to the top of the hill, then with great difficulty guided the oxen along the slippery road and, on reaching the top, reloaded the grain. It took hours to make the trip under such trying conditions. Some farmers were beginning to purchase horses, and Sven attended a sale near Whitewood where he bought his first horse, paying sixteen dollars; a mate, bought from Warren, a horse dealer, cost him slightly more. This team often hauled loads of sixty bushels, though most farmers shook their heads in disapproval and thought the loads much too large.

Some of the younger men left Sweden in search of adventure, while others came in hopes of an easier and more rewarding way of life, but it was neither an adventurous spirit nor the expectation of an easier living which induced C. O. Hofstrand to come to the new colony. He had a good position as a high school teacher in Skone, Sweden, but was very concerned at the lack of opportunity for his young family of three sons and three daughters. So it was that in



C. O. Hofstrand

July of 1888 he, with his wife, his family, and their maid, left Sweden for the Canadian west. They spent their first few weeks in the colony with the Nils Johansons, while their house was being built, probably the first frame house erected in the district. The lumber was hauled from Whitewood, and the carpenter was M. A. Lindblom, whom the Hofstrands had persuaded to emigrate to the new Swedish colony. Later he became a blacksmith in Whitewood. Due to the very high cost of transportation, the Hofstrands brought very few household furnishings, but these included a few treasured books, and they were among the few

families who continued to receive Swedish newspapers. Accustomed to city life, the isolation of the farm was a trial to them, but their determination to succeed in the new venture never failed.

One of the pioneers of 1886 recently remarked, "Mrs. Hofstrand was one of the finest women who ever came to the colony; she was indeed a lady". She bore without complaint the many trials and

disappointments of pioneer life. When her husband worked as assistant editor of a Swedish-language newspaper in Winnipeg, where he also studied and preached, she and her children carried on the farming operations themselves. One of the sons can recall the first time his father sowed wheat, broadcasting it over the newly ploughed land. To insure that no kernel was wasted, for each was precious, this son had to walk along to indicate where the seed had fallen. Doctor Hugh MacKay of the Round Lake Indian Mission found Mr. Hofstrand an interesting companion, and as he assisted him in his study of the English language he urged him to enter the ministry. This he did, and for many years was actively engaged in the work of the evangelical churches.

Life was never dull for the many born fighters who settled in the colony. They always had some project for which to work, and about 1889 the members of the Scandinavian colony club were petitioning the government for funds to build an "emigrant house", where newly arrived settlers could live until their homes were built. C. O. Hofstrand was one of the most active agitators for improvements in the colony, and old records show that he had a decided impatience with those less enthusiastic than himself. The government gave a grant of one hundred dollars and Nils Johanson, E. Zakrison and A. G. Sahlmark were appointed to superintend the building of a log house for immigrants on the Berglund farm, to be completed by the first of October. The logs were hauled from the valley to the chosen site but, before the building began, many of the logs were destroyed by a prairie fire. A further grant of fifty dollars was promised by the government, and E. A. Berg replaced A. G. Sahlmark on the building committee. However, before anything but the foundation was completed, another fire came and destroyed more logs. By this time the government was definitely disturbed over the loss of so much money, and some people were critical of the building committee, who rightly felt that they were not responsible for the loss by fire. However, the project was dropped, for it seemed that the great flow of settlers had passed its peak and the need for a house was no longer great.

These prairie fires were a constant threat to property, and fire guards sometimes failed to stop them as, fanned by high winds, they leaped across. Then old and young fought the menacing enemy; the young lads, armed with wet sacks on poles, thrilled with excitement and fear as they joined in the desperate battle. The Hofstrand house was, on one occasion, almost surrounded by fire; when it had passed, the weary but thankful mother seated the family on one of the few remaining small patches of green grass, where they ate their supper, with the fresh homemade bread a tasty treat after their narrow escape.

In 1893, C. O. Hofstrand was appointed vice consul for Sweden and Norway, holding this position until 1913. On Swedish holidays, the eyes of the settlers brightened at the sight of the Swedish flag flying from a pole in the Hofstrand yard. The majority of the people who were settling in the colony had common interests and possessed a staunch faith in God. As they were seeking divine guidance in their daily lives, it was natural for them to meet for worship. The first visiting evangelic minister was E. F. Mostrom, who was referred to as the "Red River evangelist". Later in the same year of 1888, A. F. Johnson and M. Rosendal, from the newly organized Mission Covenant Church in Winnipeg, conducted services. It was then that the Swedish Mission Covenant Church congregation was organized. C. O. Hofstrand was the first minister of this church and one of its most gifted and faithful workers, and his influence was felt far beyond the narrow confines of his parish. Teacher, farmer, editor and minister, this man never spared himself and, while on a preaching mission with Pastor Lindoff, was stricken with the fatal illness that later caused his death.

Jon Nilson Berglund's small farm in Sweden was not very productive, so to supplement its meagre living, he worked as a stonemason and carpenter. Late in the fall of 1888 he sold his property for very little and prepared to emigrate to Canada. Some years later the farm he had sold for practically nothing became a valuable piece of property, when the worth of the fine stand of timber was realized. On a gloomy November day, the Berglunds boarded a converted cattle boat and, after a rough voyage, reached New York on the sixth of December. A few days later they arrived in Whitewood with little more than their clothing, bedding, an old spinning wheel, and fourteen dollars. Fourteen dollars in his pocket, a wife and four children to support, and a long cold winter to face, was enough to daunt any but the stoutest of heart. Both this father and mother, however, possessed courage and confidence that they could surmount any difficulties which might arise. When they reached the colony, the Casper Ingbretons, a Norwegian family, offered them a home until they could build a house on their homestead.

As quickly as the weather permitted, work was begun on the log house which, with a few additions, was the family home for many years. There was an urgent need for money so, though the house still lacked a floor, a proper roof, or even windows, the father had no alternative but to get his family settled and then seek work. Few can realize how this man felt as he left his wife and family to struggle alone while he sought a job. Their fifth child was born in April of that trying year. Loneliness did not unduly trouble this pioneer mother, for she had grown up with loneliness; as a young girl she had spent her summers in the isolated hills of Sweden in charge of

cattle and goats. This was a common practice in some farming communities; when spring came the animals were driven from the farmsteads to the hills. When Mrs. Berglund was a girl in her teens, she milked sixty goats and several cows each day, and from this milk made cheese. Few women who came to the colony had such a keen appreciation of nature or a better knowledge of the medicinal value of the native herbs, bark, and roots. She used her knowledge to alleviate pain, and some almost miraculous cures are ascribed to her.

The early years were always filled with work, for there was much to be done, with the breaking of a few acres or the preparation of a garden taking many days to accomplish. Vegetables grew well in the new land, and people were largely indebted to Nils Johanson for their seeds. When he and his family had lived in Winnipeg, he had worked at the Silver Heights Market Gardens and as soon as he was settled on his homestead his former employer sent him bags of seeds. The Johansons shared with their neighbors not only the seeds but also the bountiful yield of vegetables from their own garden.

The winter of 1889 was almost at hand, and the Berglunds had been unable to buy a cow, for there was none to spare in the colony, while those outside were selling for as much as fifty dollars each. And then it was that we find a pioneer family of another nationality coming to the rescue of a Swedish family by loaning them a cow for the winter. They were the Victor Grimeaus, who had come from Vand, France in April of 1886 to homestead in the Qu'Appelle valley; by 1889 they had got nicely settled and had quite a few head of cattle.

J. N. Berglund had an inventive mind, and in 1890 he succeeded in building a small mill, with which he gristed flour for his family and his neighbors. This was a primitive mill erected in a ravine where he built a dam and a turbine, and split great three-foot stones for the grinding of the grain. It was a difficult but worthy achievement, but when the supply of water became too low to furnish the needed power, the little mill was moved to the farm yard where gears were installed. Then the mill was turned by hand to produce flour in small but welcome quantities. This was the only mill to be operated in the colony, and was the result of the constant efforts of the people to make their colony self-sufficient. In Sweden, practically every community provided its own necessities for life, and the settlers were intent on making this colony a replica of those they had known. Old records tell of their futile efforts to obtain a milling company in the colony, but a big flour mill was never anything but an unrealized dream; for years, however, the people were their own tailors, shoemakers, soapmakers and cheesemakers.

The Berglund house had a rather unusual fireplace for Mr. Berglund, the man with the inventive mind, realized how much heat es-



caped up the chimney of the conventional fireplace and built his so that the smoke was forced to make quite a circle before escaping. The last Berglund project was the building of a threshing machine, for which he carved oak cylinders, bought a big chain, and harnessed oxen to turn the wheels. It looked as though this would be a successful invention, but death came to him before he had completed to his satisfaction what was probably the only homemade threshing machine in the west. After his death, life became even more of a struggle for Mrs. Berglund and her family, but she persevered and, with her courageous nature, overcame many difficulties. Many old-timers still recall her helpfulness in times of illness or death. The Berglunds, father, mother and children, were charter members of the New Stockholm Lutheran Church, and did their part in the development of the new colony.

Olaf Nelson had been a shoemaker in his native Sweden, and when he and his wife and family reached Winnipeg in 1888 he had no intentions of settling on a homestead in the Swedish colony. However, the land agent overcame his doubts about the ability of a homestead to provide a good living, and the Nelsons were soon among the other Swedish immigrants in the colony. Many times during the next few years Olaf Nelson questioned the wisdom of his decision to farm, for misfortune dogged their footsteps and they experienced many hardships. Five years after their arrival, Mrs. Nelson died and Olaf was left with five children. But faith, hard work, and perseverance usually assure success, and so it was with the Nelsons, so that today we find members of this family and their descendants among our most prosperous and progressive citizens. Some are active workers in the local Lutheran church, whose first membership roll bears the names of Olaf and Maria Nelson and their seven children.



#### IV.

## 1889-1903

A. P. Sjostrom, with his wife and family, came from the northern part of Sweden in 1889 to file on a homestead in the colony. The log house he built has sheltered three generations of this pioneer family. A grandson, David Sandstrom, is the present owner of the homestead. This house has some historical significance, as it was here that the first steps toward the establishment of local government were taken. On May 25th, 1897, the first meeting of the Labour Statute and Fire District No. 104 was held in the Sjostrom home, and for seven years the ratepayers met here to discuss their problems and to formulate policies of local government. After the second meeting, the Local Improvement District was organized, and old records contain many references to the need for more and better roads, as well as for bridges and culverts.

Another family to arrive in the colony in 1889 was the Gavelins, who came from Sweden and were for many years very active in the community life of New Stockholm.

Lack of money for their travelling expenses compelled Nels Peter Jacobson to leave his wife and family in Bodon, Sweden, when in 1889 he sailed for Canada, determined to become a prairie farmer at the age of forty-six. At the end of two years he had a small house ready for the family, as well as sufficient money for their fares, and so they set out on the long journey. Mrs. Jacobson, with no knowledge of the English language, very little money, and five small children, found the trip a trying and occasionally a heartbreaking experience. But, with commendable zeal, she seized every opportunity to learn the language and studied with her children when they began attending Swea School. Spinning, knitting, sewing, gardening, and at times helping with the family shoemaking, left her with little leisure. Nels was frequently away from home, working to provide the family with the necessities of life. By working with I. Gavelin, another homesteader who had some equipment, he was able to break the first few acres of land on his homestead.

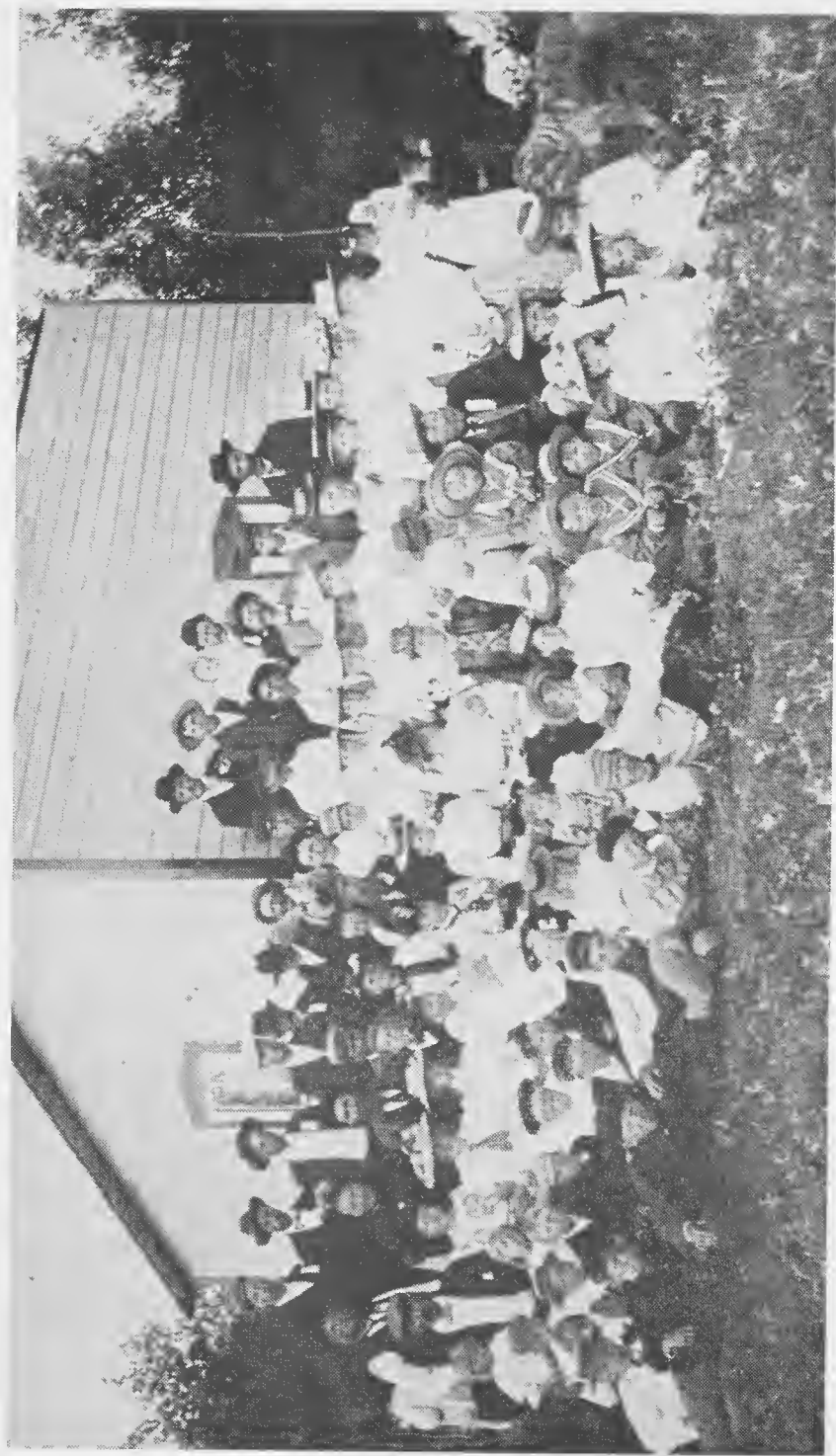
The Jacobsons were later repaid for their years of unceasing toil, for their large and comfortable home on a paying farm gave them years of pleasure. They sometimes recalled with laughter the time they were forced to find shelter in their hen house, when one wall

of their old sod house collapsed, carrying with it the new frame leanto kitchen. The forty-six foot well, dug and then set with stone by this energetic couple in 1892, continued to provide a bountiful supply of excellent water. The Jacobson homestead is at present the home of Rodney Jacobson, their grandson, who is a graduate of the University of Saskatchewan, and of his wife and their two young sons.

In the early days, cutting logs in the nearby hills was a paying winter occupation, with the logs being hauled out and sold for building purposes. Each season brought days of feverish activity; during the warm days of spring and summer, with their long hours of daylight, the people worked to clear and break more land and to put up hay and build fences, always fighting hordes of fierce mosquitos. In the autumn, there was always the danger of prairie fires, one of which swept down, with starting suddenness on the Jacobson farm while Nels was away working in Whitewood. But a neighbor came to their assistance and helped the family save their home.

Haymaking was quite an undertaking, and to insure everyone having an equal chance to secure a supply, permits for cutting were issued by the government and a time was set for the beginning of the haying season. The great haylands extended from the northern boundary of the Swedish colony to Crescent Lake, a distance of thirty miles. The haymakers went in groups, and took sufficient food to last them for three or four days. Oxen were used to haul home the hay, which had been cut with scythes and then raked. It was necessary to fence the haystacks, to protect them not only from the domestic animals but also from the bands of wild horses which had begun to roam the prairies.

Taking wheat to the flour mill at Millwood was also an occasion for neighbors to travel together. On this long trip, as well as on the slightly shorter one to Whitewood, it was necessary to carry feed for the oxen as well as food and some bedding for the men. Certain locations on the road were known to all travellers as "stopping places", where the oxen were unhitched and fed while a fire was built and water was boiled for tea. Men relaxed as they ate their lunch, and stories were swapped. A sheltered spot on the well-travelled road through the long ravine was so popular that each new arrival usually found sufficient glowing embers left from the last campfire to kindle his own. It was necessary to allow the oxen considerable time to rest and feed, since even the most willing beast was unable to chew its cud and pull a heavy load at the same time. Some of the Swedish families had brought with them sheepskin rugs which were lined with flannel and were about six by four feet in size; these rugs were very useful when one was forced to spend the night in the open.



First Picnic at Viking Temperance Hall — 1898

The flour gristed from home-grown wheat was preferred both for its fine baking qualities and for the sake of economy. Mr. Lindwall, one of the last of the oldtimers, can recall the names and prices of three brands of flour sold at Whitewood: Strong Baker, Three XXX, and Superfine, selling respectively at \$2.50, \$1.50 and \$3.00. Farmers received very little for any surplus butter, eggs or wheat they might have for sale, so the cost of a sack of flour was a matter of deep concern. The bread for the large farm families was baked in the home kitchens, as no Swedish housewife would have dreamed of buying a loaf of bread from a bakery, even had it been available. Their reputation as excellent cooks was soon well established, and the so-called "outsiders" welcomed every opportunity to join the Swedes at their social gatherings.

These were held at first in the homes, later in the schools, and finally in the new community building known as the Viking Temperance Hall. Debates were popular, with their subjects ranging from the very serious to the most frivolous. All were debated with equal fervor, and the carefully practiced gestures and the studied elegance of expression quite overwhelmed the poor judges, who sat wiping their brows as they struggled to arrive at a decision while the eyes of the debaters' relatives were fixed upon them. Singing was also enjoyed, and there was a spirit of happy fellowship as the cares of the yesterdays were forgotten.

The Jacobsons shared in all these social events, as well as in all activities concerned with their church, the Swedish Covenant Mission. Both were great readers, who took a keen interest in world events, with Nels having a particular interest in history, both ancient and modern. During his years of blindness he derived his greatest enjoyment from the reading aloud which the members of his family did for him. Both he and Mrs. Jacobson spent their final years in darkness, but with their intellects unimpaired. Surrounded by friends and relatives, and with their radio bringing the world to their door, they found life a pleasant thing. Mr. Jacobson died in 1942, and his wife in 1948.

Anna Britta Svenson, a widow living in Strom, Sweden, had bidden goodbye to several of her children during the years of 1887 and 1888 as they embarked for western Canada, but it was not until 1889 that she was able to see the land which was described by the land agents as the "Golden West". Accompanied by her daughter and son-in-law, Karen and Jens Olson, and their family, she arrived in Whitewood on a pleasant day in July. She was eager to see her other sons and daughters and, though the Olsons begged her to wait until the rig came to take them to the colony, she took two of her grandchildren and began walking to Ohlen Post Office. A strange road meant nothing to her, for while others less stout of heart

might fear meeting wild animals or lurking bands of Indians, Anna Britta feared neither man nor beast.

The long July day was drawing to a close, and still there was no sign of the post office, when suddenly some Indians appeared. Grandmother Svenson addressed them in her best Swedish manner, and they replied in their best manner, but since neither had the least idea of what the other had said, it was not a very intelligible conversation. The Indians, it was learned later, had tried to direct her to the Indian Mission School, but they finally gave up and left, while the weary grandmother and grandchildren stumbled on until they reached the newly built New Stockholm School where they spent the night, scarcely half a mile from their relatives at Ohlen.

Mrs. Svenson readily adapted herself to life in the new country, and was an active worker in the Lutheran Church Ladies Aid. She lived to see her big family all become well established in the colony which they helped develop. Her son-in-law and daughter, Jens and Karen Olson, had come to Canada in search of opportunities for their growing family. They spent a few months with relatives, the Paul Stromgrens, and then went to Whitewood, where Mr. Olson began work as a tailor, an occupation he had followed in Sweden. One of the Whitewood merchants provided all the materials for suits and overalls, and paid him five dollars for each three-piece suit and twenty-five cents for each pair of overalls. In 1893, Karen Olson and the family moved to the house which was then in readiness on the homestead in the colony, but except for brief periods Mr. Olson continued to work in Whitewood until ill health forced his retirement to the farm, where he died in 1899.

Mrs. Olson and her sons carried on successful farming operations and, though they encountered many setbacks, they achieved success. The husband and father knew little about farming, but felt he should give the sons a bit of advice from time to time. One of them recalls with amusement the time his father undertook to demonstrate to him the correct way to break land. The boy hitched the oxen to the walking plow, and his father, with an air of dignity and great self-confidence, grasped the plow handles and proceeded to start down the field. Faster and faster went the oxen, never halting until they, the plow, and the would-be instructor were in a small slough. With a chastened air, Mr. Olson turned and walked away, leaving the plowing to the boy while he returned to his tailoring.

Mrs. Olson was the mother of eleven children and one of the colony's most helpful neighbors, and no one who knew Karen Olson will ever forget her. She dispensed hospitality with a lavish hand, her Swedish waffles with homemade jam and whipped cream appearing on her table as though by magic, while she kept up a lively flow of conversation as she prepared the food. Her son, Emmanuel,

farmed her land as well as his own and lived at home. Pink-cheeked, bright eyed, and smiling, Mrs. Olson kept this lovely home, which was always brightened with many house plants, in immaculate order until shortly before her death at the age of ninety-three.

In the early days on the farm, produce brought very meager returns and Mrs. Olson's excellent dairy butter, which she packed in 35 pound tubs, brought as little as ten cents a pound, occasionally only five. Number One Hard wheat sometimes sold for as little as twenty-five cents a bushel, and in the year 1907 Andrew, one of the Olson boys, hauled a load of Number Five wheat to Stockholm for which he was paid fifteen cents a bushel, with the proceeds of the load going to pay for one sack of flour.

A man who gave over forty years of unselfish service to the colony was another of the 1889 arrivals. A native of Sweden, A. G. Olson had spent one year as an assistant minister in a church in Minneapolis before deciding to emigrate to Canada. On January 10th, 1891, he was joined by his fiancée, Maria Gronquist of Minneapolis, and they were united in marriage by O. C. Hofstrand, minister of the newly-organized Swedish Mission Covenant church. This ceremony was the first of almost countless ceremonies to be performed in the Olson home, for Mr. Olson was the first lay preacher of the New Stockholm Lutheran church, and later became the stationed minister of the Swedish Mission church, and so officiated at many weddings. From the time of his arrival in the colony, he had been active in every community project, and his wife's work as a teacher of English to the adult Swedes was of inestimable value.

The hospitality of their home was enjoyed by many people, of all classes and creeds, who came with their problems, their joys, and their sorrows. This sympathetic and understanding couple never failed to respond to their needs. The Olsons' life was crowded with work, but it was also filled with many compensations. Any place which lacked a church service was a challenge to Pastor Olson, and he never refused a call for assistance. As well as serving his own church faithfully, he preached at Freedhome, Larson and Excel schools, and was of great service to the people of Percival when they organized their church, Emmanuel. He travelled from point to point by horse and buggy, and an old church record shows that in one year he preached six times at Percival, three times at Fleming, and on fifty Sundays in his home church. In addition to this, he had thirty-five mid-week evening meetings and was present at many meetings of the Ladies Aid.

Mrs. Olson, with her sympathetic understanding of people, was an invaluable helpmate for her husband, who was a man possessed of a burning zeal for the work of the ministry. She was a tireless member of the Ladies' Aid Society, was keenly interested in handi-



Mr. and Mrs. A. G. Olson and daughters Olga, Ruby, Esther and Anna

crafts, and delighted in teaching others. She was a skillful seamstress, and had left her own dressmaking establishment in Minneapolis to become the wife of a rural minister. When the incomes of the pastor and of his parishioners were low, her clever hands proved their worth, and this woman, small in stature but with an indomitable spirit, was a familiar figure as, mounted on her trusty saddle horse, she rode to Whitewood. There the more fashion-conscious ladies were begging for her dresses, and on each trip she would cut and fit two or three, then return home to make them. She quickly completed them, and then travelled the long road again, with garments worthy of Paris labels.

The four daughters who grew up in this parsonage, Anna Zakrisson, Ruby Major, Olga Wall and Esther Hanson, appreciated the sterling qualities of their unselfish parents and, more clearly than most, knew the value of the Olson home to the community. They laughingly remarked on their familiarity with the catechisms and the baptism and marriage services of the church, all of which they had heard over and over again.

The busy life of Pastor Olson ended in 1931, and five years later his wife died and was buried beside him in the cemetery of the little Mission Covenant church.

Every pioneer has happy memories of the old days, especially of the annual picnics. Many of the boys of those days are now grandfathers, who enjoy reminiscing about their barefoot days. From spring until fall they worked and played without shoes, glad to feel



the good earth beneath their feet. These hardy young Swedes played football in their bare feet, as did their opponents, the Indian lads from the Round Lake School. The Indian boys always led after the first half, but the Swedish boys, more accustomed to manual labor and therefore in better condition, invariably won the game. For many years there was very little money awarded for prizes at the picnics, but young and old together shared in the various games. Some years after the barefoot ball games at the picnics had ceased, the young lads at school continued to play football without shoes, and one day one of the Hammerstrom lads gave the ball an extra vigorous kick, breaking his big toe. His companions at Scandia School were amazed when he appeared at school the following day with his big toe tied with binder twine and held in place by a cord around his ankle.

Some descendants of the Oslund and Hoglund families, who came to the colony in April of 1890, are at present residents of the Swedish colony. These families were closely related, and shared the hardships and joys of pioneer life. Among Mrs. Hoglund's few prized possessions was her spinning wheel, which had been carefully carved and assembled by a young Swedish admirer, who gave it to her when she was sixteen. This spinning wheel, considerably over one hundred years old, is a treasured heirloom in the home of her late grandson, Mikael Ingemar Hoglund, and has been used by Mrs. Mikael Hoglund to spin yarn for socks and mittens for the original owner's great great grandchildren. In the early days, wool for spinning was scarce, but the Marceils in the valley had a small flock of sheep and Mrs. Oslund, who also had a spinning wheel, was known to walk to their farm, often carrying her youngest child. There she assisted with the shearing in order to obtain some wool for her family's socks and mitts.

The women of these two families were also great cheesemakers. One variety was made outdoors in a huge black iron pot hung over a low fire. This cheesemaking was a pleasant task on a bright sunny day, as from time to time the cover of the old iron pot was carefully raised and the contents were gently stirred. Dairy thermometers were unknown, but the Swedish housewives always knew when the cheese was ready to pour.

The log house built on the homestead of Mikael Hoglund in 1890 was at one time the home of three generations of the family. When Mikael built a new house, the old one was carefully taken down and each log was numbered and taken to his son's homestead, where it was reassembled. At least part of this old house remains standing on this homestead, which is still farmed by the Hoglunds.

In 1891, Mikael August Hoglund, with his wife Katharina and their three children, emigrated from Vestermorland, Sweden to Stephen,

Minnesota, but on September 24th, 1893 Katharina died. Mikael August was faced with the problem of earning a living and caring for his three motherless children, so he decided to join his parents in the New Stockholm colony in western Canada. Money was very scarce, but Mikael August was a skilful man and made clothing for his children to wear on the journey. They arrived in Whitewood on a cold winter day in 1894, with only thirty-five cents in cash. They were very hungry, so the father bought a loaf of bread and some butter. It was with great relief and joy that he met one of his father's neighbors, Kasper Inglebretson, who had come to town with a sleigh and oxen. Kasper, a Norwegian, was always ready to assist another and offered at once to take them with him to the colony.

August Hoglund was probably the first tinsmith and coppersmith to come to the colony. In Sweden he had made beautiful copper kettles, coffee pots, cow bells and other small articles which he sold in the market place of his home town. His wife also had a stall in the market, where she sold a variety of delicious confections. Her skillful fingers made attractive containers for her wares, and people crowded around her display, which appealed to both the eye and the taste. August was also an excellent carpenter and, in order to get money to keep his family and to buy the equipment for farming, he worked in Whitewood, where he made strong, sturdy chairs to retail in Lamont's store. This energetic man also worked at stone masonry, bridge building and as a blacksmith and, when nearly seventy years of age, tinned the cross on the present Lutheran Church. In the country cemetery beside this beautiful church, members of three generations of the pioneer Hoglund family are buried.

Mikael Hoglund, one of August's sons, after homesteading in the Dubuc district began farming on his father's homestead. He lived there with his wife, the former Lorenthine Marie Bjarki of Norway, and their family until his death in 1951. He was keenly interested in the welfare of the community, and particularly of the school, and was a member of the school board for Swea School for thirty-three years. He had many interesting experiences as he travelled around the country digging wells, some of them being amusing and others having almost tragic results. He often recalled the time when he was digging a well on the Sahlmark farm and, at a depth of thirty feet, found a part of a moss-covered tree and, half-hidden beside it, the nest of a prairie chicken with petrified eggs, an unusual sight which many people came to see.

Jonas Johanson, with his wife and two sons, arrived in the colony from Sweden on April 3rd, 1890. They were Lutherans, and were soon active members of the newly-organized New Stockholm Lutheran congregation. Throughout the years, this family and its descendants have loyally supported the church which Jonas Johan-



Mr. and Mrs. Jonas Johanson and children, 1897

son helped to build. He and his brother, P. J. Selin, were largely responsible for the hand-sawn timber that was used in the floor and ceiling of the first Lutheran church in the colony, and some years later he was a member of the building fund committee when the present church was planned. Jonas Johanson was a capable farmer with executive ability, and he had unbounded faith in the country, so that although the family experienced the joys and the sorrows of the average homesteader they had perhaps fewer of the privations. Some of the settlers lacked this faith and sold their homesteads as soon as they had obtained their titles, but the Johansons kept adding to their holdings of land. The home they established wielded a fine influence in the community, and Mr. and Mrs. Johanson, with their family, had the respect and affection of all their neighbors. They were content to live and to die in their prairie home in the colony in which they had believed and which they had done so much toward developing.

Others who homesteaded in 1890 included Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Westerlund and M. Hoglund from Sweden, P. Anderson from Denmark, John Olson and family from Chicago, and C. Hendrickson of Whitewood.

New Year's Day of 1890 found a spirit of dissatisfaction among some of the members of the Scandinavian Colony Club, who evidenced impatience with their officers and with some of the other members whom they believed were too easily satisfied with the government's weak excuses for not granting at least some of their requests. A very heated debate on January 3rd resulted in A. C. Sahlmark and men with like opinions leaving the gathering. A meeting was called at the home of John and Olaus Olson, and the Scandinavian Farmers Union was organized, with A. G. Sahlmark elected as chairman, J. E. Westin as vice-chairman, J. Teng as secretary and E. A. Berg as treasurer. These were forward-looking men, who had early realized the importance of farmers uniting for their common good, so in the humble home of John and Olaus Olson, homesteaders of 1886, one of the first Farmers Unions in the Northwest Territories was organized. But two clubs tended to cause further dissension, so on January 19th, 1891 a meeting was called and, following a lively discussion, it was moved by Olaf Nelson and seconded by J. N. Berglund that the two clubs amalgamate and be known as the Farmer's Union. This was an active organization for many years.

Club meetings, Christmas and New Year's gatherings, and the big summer picnic were the highlights of the year. When the people met for the picnic of 1890, they paused in the midst of their celebration to recall the progress made by the colony during the previous four years. One thousand acres of land had been broken on the forty-six homesteads, the number of livestock was steadily increasing, a new road had been built through the Sahlmark ravine, and work had been done on other roads. Mail arrived weekly at Ohlen Post Office, coming in from Whitewood; there were two flourishing Christian congregations, with both having made plans for the building of churches; two school districts had been organized, and one schoolhouse had been completed and was in session. The merrymakers returned to their homes, and the hardships and privations were forgotten for the time. A feeling of optimism prevailed, and the people looked to the future with courage and with renewed faith in the colony.

By the end of the year 1891, only two new families had been welcomed to the colony, one being W. F. Moller and family from Denmark, who had tried their fortune in Australia before coming to Canada. O. C. Pearson and his wife Gunilla, a daughter of the pioneer Zakrison family, came from Winnipeg to file on a homestead; in 1916 this family moved to the United States.

The great influx of settlers in 1892 was a welcome surprise to the people of the colony, following as it did the years of 1890 and 1891 when immigration was practically at a standstill. Among those who

arrived in 1892 and who shared in the work of developing this new district were A. Anderson and his son Anders, Erik Bloom, N. Larson, J. P. Gramston and family, E. Johnson and family, Olaf Erikson, A. Carstrom, Hans Johnson, Anders Jonson and family, P. Stendahl, and John Persson and family, as well as a stone mason named Peterson who died a year later. All these immigrants came from northern Sweden, while from Denmark there came Nils Nilson and Valdemar Munch, the latter being the first of three Munch brothers to emigrate to the colony.

P. J. Seline of Deorotea parish in Sweden was another of the settlers of 1892, and the life of the colony was definitely enriched by the coming of this man, who established a home in which he lived until his death in 1952 in his ninety-second year. He was a staunch Lutheran and joined the congregation of the New Stockholm Lutheran Church, which he supported and served throughout his long life. After years of active service as a trustee and as a deacon, the church honored him by installing him as an honorary deacon.

Three years after his arrival, he and Mrs. Sara Stromberg were married at the home of her brother-in-law, E. A. Berg, by the pastor of the Mission Covenant Church, C. O. Hofstrand. Mrs. Seline and the three children of her former marriage became members of her husband's church, and many years later one of her daughters, Anna Stromberg, became the wife of the first ordained minister stationed at that church. P. J. Seline was one of the skilled workmen who assisted in the building of the church, and before its erection public services of worship were held in the Seline home, as well as in those of the Sjostroms, Bergs, Zakrisons and others where space permitted. The children who grew up in the Seline home were fortunate, for they were taught to value the worthwhile things of life and to find satisfaction and joy in service to the community. Erik Stromberg, Mrs. Erik Berglund, and Adolph and Percy Seline are the only ones of the eleven members of this family to remain in the colony.

The ships of Captain N. M. Nilson of Norway had sailed the seas for years, and the captain, his wife, and two daughters enjoyed a pleasant way of life until disaster struck his ships. Within a year, two were lost at sea, reducing him almost to bankruptcy and driving him from the seas. He then turned to the prairies to recoup his fortunes, and in 1892 the Nilson family arrived in the colony. They had sufficient money to build and furnish a comfortable home and to buy the necessary farm equipment, and during the four years they spent on the homestead they shared in the work of the community. The tall, silvery-haired captain, with his well-pressed clothing and highly-polished black shoes, was an outstanding figure in any gathering. He was particularly so when, in the absence of a minister, he

humbly led in the service of worship. His wife and daughters, with their gentle manners, are still remembered by some of the oldtimers. For some years after the Nilsons moved to the United States, their land lay uncultivated, but it was later purchased by Joseph Meston.

In 1892, Axel Olson, who had first gone from Sweden to the United States, brought his wife and family to the colony, where his brothers A. G. and John were well established. Another Swedish homesteader of 1892 who came to the colony after a brief sojourn in the United States was Nils Dahl. He and his wife, the former Britta Zakrisson, opened the first little store in the colony in their home. This store, stocked with a few staple groceries, was greatly appreciated by the homesteaders. Following the organization of the Scandia School District, but before the school had been built, classes were held in this same home, with the nine pupils sitting around a long table built by Nils for that purpose. This pioneer couple shared in the development of the colony, and their descendants have shared actively in its church and community life.

To jot down the little everyday happenings as well as the more important events of one's life may seem of little moment at the time, but years later such diaries are of great interest to the families concerned and of inestimable value to a compiler of local history. John Persson was such a diarist and when he, with his wife Karina and their six children, left their home in Osterstrom, Sweden on the morning of February 27th, 1892 enroute for Canada, his little black-covered book went with him.

Travelling by stage and train, the family reached Stockholm on March 1st and were met by an agent of the Allan Steamship Line who directed them to lodgings. The following day they continued their journey to Goteburg, a seaport in the southwest of Sweden, where government officials met all emigrants and inspected the stamped papers of recommendation carried by all heads of families. Small boats in the harbour then took the emigrants for America to the large ship which was to carry them to Hull, England. John Persson wrote, "There was music and dancing for those who could take part, but I was occupied with my family". A late supper consisting of one slice of coarse, heavy rye bread, scantily buttered, and a cup of liquid which John stated "they called coffee" was all they received. The sleeping quarters were cold and draughty, and all the extra wraps carried by the Perssons were used to cover the children. Breakfast of bread and coffee was served at nine, after which the people enjoyed the fine, sunny weather on the deck. But John was very displeased with the food and wrote in his diary, "I would advise all fathers of families, who intend to take this journey, to supply themselves with large quantities of good rich food. Do not trust the agent's promise of good food, it has not the slightest likeness to the

truth". The skimpy and unappetizing food was served from long counters, and adults grew weary and children cried as they stood in line to receive their share.

The ship docked at Hull on Sunday, March 5th, and the day was spent either on board or in walking the dirty, narrow streets in the vicinity of the docks. The price of food seemed high to the hungry Swedes, and John wrote... "two kroner for a can of milk, and exorbitant price". He continued, "The only thing offered gratis was a religious tract, well meant by the giver but not so well received by the receiver", for at that time the travellers were more in need of food for the body than for the soul. But the journey from Hull to Liverpool was delightful, with everyone in high spirits as they looked out at the pleasant countryside. They were met by a government agent who took them to a comfortable hotel, where they enjoyed an excellent meal. That afternoon at one, they boarded the ship which was to take them to Halifax and, after their medical examinations, they were directed to their quarters, women and children in the stern, men in the bow. The first night on board was clear and very cold and, greatly concerned about his family, John rose at six and was relieved to find them sleeping. The second morning all passengers were ordered on deck while their quarters were cleaned and aired. The Perssons had heavy woollen clothing, but suffered constantly from the cold.

So far the sea had been very calm and there had been very little seasickness among the passengers. However, a storm arose one afternoon and continued unabated for days, while waves washed over the decks and the few who were not seasick were forced to remain below in the close-cramped quarters with those who were. Finally they all crawled up on deck, where there was a steady breeze blowing; the sails were hoisted and the ship made excellent speed. A second terrible storm arose during the night on March 20th, during which the door of the men's dormitory was torn from its hinges and the men were hit by the full fury of the storm. Finally, at six on a calm Sunday evening, they sighted land and they disembarked at Halifax that night, March 20th, leaving on the following day for Winnipeg. The Perssons said many goodbyes to their companions of the voyage as they reached their destinations along the way.

Each day John wrote in his diary, frequently mentioning the wild beauty of the land and its similarity to parts of Sweden. On March 26th they arrived in Winnipeg, where they were met by John's brother, Nils Dahl. They visited the Immigration Office, and late that night they left for Whitewood, arriving there at noon on Sunday and being met by Mrs. Hendrickson, who took them to the "Emigrant House". There they were welcomed and served coffee and food by the Hendricksons, who occupied rooms in the house. This hospi-



The John Persson homestead; interior and exterior





tality impressed the Perssons, and their hearts were light as they thought of the future. The following day Nils Dahl, with John and his eldest son, John, drove to the colony where they were welcomed by the Johansons at the Ohlen Post Office and given a meal. They continued to Alex Stenberg's, since he was in charge of locating homesteads, and here John states they were... "well received, had supper and then to bed".

The following day a team and wagon was sent to Whitewood to bring the other members of the family to the colony. This was a sad trip for them, for their lovely little two-year-old daughter was ill. The harrowing sea voyage, the uncomfortable train journey, and the jolting trip over the rough trails proved too much for the child and during the night of April 2nd, according to her father's diary... "she was torn from our family".

This family experienced all the hardships of pioneering, but their patient industry brought its own reward. Throughout the years, the Perssons have been active in every phase of community life. John and Karin Persson encouraged their children in their efforts to secure an education and, though New Stockholm School was about six miles from their homestead, some of the children walked that distance, with all of them grasping every opportunity to gain knowledge. School attendance, for the average boy in the colony, was very irregular, as each had to take a man's place in the work of the farm. The more studious lads welcomed the sound of rain on the roof, for a wet day meant another day in school.

Jack Persson, John's eldest son, was the first in the district to own a powerful twenty-four horsepower steam engine, and many acres of brush breaking were done with it. This quick method of breaking land was in marked contrast to that first done on the Persson farm, when a man with an axe grubbed out the roots and an ox-drawn plow turned single furrows.

Gustaf and Godfrey Persson, two of Jack's younger brothers, married and settled on farms in the colony and have assisted in all movements which have been for its good. It was largely through their efforts and those of their neighbor, Harry Koch, that the Pioneer Hall is available for the use of the district. About 1896, the local Temperance Society built a hall near the Lutheran Church, and for years it was used by the people of the entire district. However, in 1922 it was offered for sale and the Persson brothers and Harry Koch realized that if it were removed the whole district would suffer. After careful deliberation, these men formed a local co-operative company and sold sufficient shares to purchase the hall. It had to be partly dismantled before it could be moved to its present location on land purchased from Gus Persson about five miles south of the village of Stockholm. During the years additions have been made

to this hall, which is an asset to its rural district. For many years all the district's social events were held there, with local orchestras providing music for dances and local artists giving excellent concerts. Godfrey Persson's brass band always drew a good attendance. The Boys' and Girls' Clubs met here, and the annual grain exhibitions and the displays of handicrafts drew large and appreciative crowds. Since 1927, the annual Swedish picnic has been held on the grounds of Pioneer Hall, and on these occasions the Swedish flag which was presented to the district by His Majesty the late King Gustaf is flown with the Union Jack. The hall is still widely used, but it was in the more leisurely days of long ago that the people of this and other rural districts really appreciated the community halls; then, every dance and concert was a gala event.

After the settlers of 1892 had obtained their homesteads, there were very few left, and many of the immigrants who came to the colony continued to a newly opened district at Percival. One arrival of 1893 was Mrs. Bengstrom, accompanied by her twelve-year-old daughter, who later married John Olson, the first person to file on a homestead in the New Stockholm colony. The daughter married a Mr. Sandine, and three of their children live in the colony, Charles Sandine, Annie Wickberg, and Selma Wickberg, while the fourth child, Mrs. Esther Anderson, lives in Dauphin, Manitoba. Others who came to the colony during 1893 and 1894 included Jacob Stenberg, Carl Berglund, and two Norwegian brothers, Ole and Axel Pederson. S. A. Lindskog, who had been a wagon maker in Sweden, first came to Whitewood and worked there for some time before settling in the colony in 1895. Three Danes arrived in the colony during 1893, namely Alfred Munch, Toft, and Kraag.

During these years in the colony, people were improving their farms and homes, but many were discouraged over the prolonged delay in the building of the railroad. With an increased acreage in crop, the marketing of grain was a big problem, and the long distance from a doctor was a matter of grave concern. The government was urged to take cognizance of these conditions and to make some effort to alleviate them, but these pleas met with little result, though the settlers continued to do all they could to improve local conditions.

In 1895 the first agricultural society was formed, with the membership of this Little Cut Arm and Qu'Appelle Society consisting of farmers both in the colony and beyond its boundaries. Charles Sahlmark was its first president, and Mrs. Cosgrave of Sumner was elected secretary-treasurer, while five of the directors were farmers in the colony. This organization marked a turning point in the life of these Swedish farmers, for working in this lively and active society gave them a wider outlook and promoted a better understanding of other peoples.

They were constantly seeking solutions to their problems, and in 1896 a group met at the home of C. O. Hofstrand and organized a Liberal Club, with Axel Olson, V. Anderson and Nils Dahl forming the executive. An old report of this meeting contains the terse statement, "We feel we have been forgotten by the Conservative Party". These people were very keenly interested in politics, and they realized more clearly than many the power of the ballot. They decided that they could not afford to split their votes, so at election time each candidate was very carefully considered and one was chosen as their man. Politicians soon realized that these were thinking people who were not easily swayed by oratory, and the speakers who could not produce the facts and figures to substantiate their statements had an unhappy time in the colony.

Though there was some dissatisfaction with living conditions, and though briefs were forwarded regularly to the land agent or to the railroad company, the people were generally happy and life was a goodly thing. There was a measure of prosperity, and many farmers had greatly extended their original holdings of land. While some had sold out and left, the newcomers with their fresh enthusiasm tended to incite to fresh efforts those who had borne the burdens of wresting a home from the prairies. The mothers and fathers had a sense of achievement as they saw their children obtaining sound elementary education in the local schools. At the end of the first decade, there were seventy families living in the colony, and there was a population of three hundred. Two thousand acres of land was broken, and although some farmers continued to use oxen, the majority owned some horses, of which there were two hundred in the colony, with approximately one thousand head of cattle. The two school districts were assessed at fifty thousand dollars, while the two churches were beyond price to the people who had sacrificed and toiled to build them.

Jonas Norlin came from Sweden in 1897 to join his daughter, Mrs. Jonas Johanson, but few other settlers arrived. The following years saw the land north of the colony surveyed for homesteads, and many travellers passed through the colony on their way to this new district, which was largely settled by Swedes from Minnesota. New Stockholm continued to attract a few, however, and in October of 1898 the third Munch brother, Holger, joined Valdemar and Alfred. The Munch family of Copenhagen had suffered great financial losses, and only Peter, the eldest son of the family, had finished his education when the financial blow hit them. Peter was later a cabinet minister in the Danish government for over twenty years, but Holger, the youngest son, saw little future for himself in Denmark and decided to join his two brothers who were already established in western Canada. When he started work for Alex Stenberg at three

dollars a month, he began to have serious doubts about his future in Canada, but since Alex was to teach him the fine art of farming, Holger thankfully accepted his three dollars, though both teacher and pupil had many trying experiences. By 1905 Holger felt he could safely attempt to farm his own land and began with one hundred and sixty acres, purchasing a further half section a few years later. Oxen, drought, frost and flood plagued him, and he found it very difficult to make his annual payments. One year his total cash income was one hundred and twenty dollars, plus a ticket to Winnipeg to see Mr. Jones, the manager of the Canada Northwest Land Company, from which company Holger had purchased his land. The manager was so favorably impressed with the evident honesty and sincerity of the personable young Dane that he was more generous than Holger had hoped, and the young farmer returned to Stockholm with some of his money still in his pocket. While on the farm he still found time to engage in all the sports of the day, and old-timers still recall picnics at which Holger Munch played football.

1903 was a momentous year for the colony, for the long-awaited railroad became a reality and the residents of the New Stockholm colony no longer felt isolated from the outside world by the twenty or more miles of rough, hilly road between them and Whitewood. Their pattern of life was by now established, and these thrifty, hospitable people, whose doors had never been closed against any man, felt that their dreams had been realized and their faith in the land justified.



New Breaking

## V.

# HOMESTEADING

EVEN in the early days on the prairies, Shylock demanded his pound of flesh, and the insistence of one creditor that the paltry sum of fourteen dollars be paid by a certain date might have claimed a life. A poor widow bought a desperately needed wagon for forty-two dollars, and managed to pay off all but fourteen dollars by the time the note was due. But threshing was late and the agent called and informed her that unless he was paid the wagon would be seized. When he had left, the widow finished her day's work and then walked through the dark to a neighbor's house to collect a few dollars owed her. These, with the nickels she had so painfully saved, amounted to seven dollars.

Finally the threshers came and her pitifully small crop was put in sacks and loaded on the wagon she was in danger of losing. With great difficulty, she managed to hitch an unbroken steer with a bull, and set out for Whitewood. She had no lines, but knelt in the wagon and guided her ill-matched team with a long willow pole. They walked and ran over the rough trail until suddenly they were at the top of a steep incline, down which they dashed without stopping until the whole outfit was standing in the river. Almost in despair, she waited for them to move, wondering whether the wagon would upset as they climbed the bank. But the journey was finished safely, the debt was paid, and she made the journey home. The memory of that trip, however, lingered with her until her death.

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It is not too unusual to hear or read of a vicious bull causing bodily harm or death, but on the Holstein farm it was a big boar, rather than a bull, which went mad; snarling and pawing the air, he was a terrifying sight. The children were hurried into the house and the door was closed, but the gun was not available without crossing the animal's path, something which nobody dared to do. Axel Jacobson was in the barn and, grabbing a long rope, he climbed through the skylight and prepared to catch the pig. The frenzied animal rushed into the barn and, with great dexterity, Axel dropped a noose over its head and managed to hold the struggling beast until someone brought a gun and shot it.

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## THE PRAIRIE FIRE OF 1888

Prairie fires were always feared, particularly when they swept down from the north, where great tracts of land lay unbroken. The last days of September, 1888, found the settlers going about their work with a feeling of great anxiety, for the air was heavy with smoke. It hung like a heavy cloud along the northern horizon, and when darkness fell they could see the distant glow of fire, extending like an ever-lengthening golden chain along the north toward the west. Suddenly the wind changed, and the fire sped on toward the colony, while flocks of birds flew south and small animals hid in holes in the ground.

On the morning of Michaelmas Sunday, the twenty-eighth of September, the sun rose blood-red and ashes were carried through the air. The wind increased steadily, and by noon the flames could be seen quite plainly. The people watched with anxious eyes as, one by one, the bluffs were enveloped and the fire swept over the land. Wide fireguards had been ploughed around the buildings, and around the little stacks of winter feed, and half-blinded men, women and children stood ready to fight the flames, should they cross the barriers. Thankfully they watched the fire pass, leaving in its wake acres of blackened, desolate land on which even the prairie wood had been burned down into its roots.

Following this destructive fire, the government enacted a law which imposed a penalty of two hundred dollars on any person found guilty of starting a fire, with one half of the fine to go to the informant.

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Alex Stenberg, with two companions, once had a gruelling experience with a prairie fire. Out to enjoy a day's fishing, they left their wagon and the tethered oxen in a shady spot on the forbidden ground of the Indian Reserve and proceeded to the river. Not long after, they smelled smoke and, on looking back, saw a fire. They rushed back to the spot where they had left the wagon and the oxen, finding them almost surrounded by fire. They escaped with extreme difficulty and only after the legs of the oxen had been badly singed. There was no fishing that day, for the Indians had taught them a deserved lesson, that "No Trespassing" means what it says.

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Doctor Mackay had warned the settlers to exercise great caution in dealing with the Indians, who naturally resented their presence and the necessity of sharing their land with these strange new people. He had great sympathy for the Indians and, more than most white men of his day, understood that proud people. It was because of his influence that no one from the band of Indians at Round Lake joined in the Rebellion of 1885.

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Axel Holstein sometimes recalled a few anxious moments which he experienced on a trip home from Whitewood. Daylight was fading when he rounded a bend to come face to face with several Indians seated around a campfire. Not a word was spoken, but there was a feeling of tenseness in the air. Axel dared not appear to hurry, though he expected an attack momentarily; his thoughts were less of his own fate than that of his young wife at home. Finally a bend in the winding trail hid him from the hostile eyes, and the weary, plodding oxen, as though sensing the danger and the uneasiness of their master, finished the trip home in record time.

\* \* \*

The children of the pioneers had no money for expensive sport equipment, but they could generally get a football and whenever young people gathered a football game was usually soon arranged. Eli Jacobson remembers one game which was played in the yard of a protesting farmer, who feared his windows might be broken. He rushed from the house, grabbed the ball and jumped on it, with results far beyond his expectations, for it catapulted him through the air. The amusement of the boys added to his discomfiture and rage so that he gave the ball a mighty kick, sending it right through one of the windows he had sought to protect. The lads retrieved their ball and sought another playground, leaving the subdued farmer to view the broken window pane.

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When Alex Sahlmark was fourteen, he had an experience which proved his ability to qualify as a long-distance walker, if not a runner. His mother needed flour, so a tub of freshly-made butter was placed in a cart and Alex proudly hitched up a newly-purchased pony and set out for Whitewood, without a care in the world and as happy as a boy could be. The pony raced along the familiar trail until they reached a crossroad which led to its former home. After a time, and with considerable difficulty, Alex managed to get the pony back on the Whitewood road, but each time he climbed into the cart the pony balked. Up and down the hills and along the winding trail went the pony, with the weary boy plodding beside the cart. The town was finally reached and the butter was exchanged for flour; Alex decided to take a brief rest before beginning the journey home, for he was filled with anxiety as he thought of another long walk. But the return trip was uneventful and Mrs. Sahlmark prepared to "set" her bread. When she opened the carefully sewn bag, however, she was dismayed to find that mice had been at work. There was no other flour at hand, so that bag had to be used, and a member of the family was sent to the Johanson's to borrow a sieve, with which the flour was cleaned.

Many unwary travellers in the days of the old west had the terrifying experience of being lost on the prairies in a raging blizzard. The trails wound across fields and through bluffs, so when the thick white snow, driven in blinding clouds by the howling winds, swooped suddenly down on the travellers, they were lost. This was the experience of Alex Stenberg on one of his trips from Millwood, Manitoba with a load of newly-gristed flour and feed. While Alex searched vainly for a trace of the road, the weary oxen plodded on through the rapidly forming drifts. One stumbled and fell, but with difficulty Alex managed to get it to its feet; once again they floundered on through the snow, now hopelessly lost. Then with startling suddenness the storm abated, and through the darkness Alex saw a light in the window of a distant farmhouse. With renewed courage, he pushed on and eventually reached shelter. He related this experience many times, invariably remarking, "If I hadn't seen that light and got my bearings, I would have perished". A light in the Stenberg's window was Alex's way of expressing his thanks for the light which probably saved his life.

Without oxen, it would have been almost impossible for the average homesteader to have broken the necessary acres in the time required by the government. Horses were scarce and required considerable care and feed, while oxen grazed on the prairie they were breaking and, in winter, throve on the prairie grass which had been cut and stacked. However, they tried the patience of every man and woman who drove them, for they would move stolidly along and then, without apparent reason, stop.

Alex Stenberg often praised his oxen and was sure no one owned a better yoke, since they never caused him any trouble. At least not until one fine fall day when they disillusioned him. And the spot they chose was the middle of the Qu'Appelle River, with Alex and fifteen sacks of wheat in the wagon behind them. It was considered nothing to ford the river at a shallow spot, but it was extremely frustrating to sit there with oxen which refused to move. Neither loud demands nor words of entreaty availed; there they stood. At last, in desperation, Alex stripped off his clothing and carried the fifteen bags of wheat to the other side of the river. Then he dressed and once again begged the beasts to move. This time, urged on with a goad and by loud expletives, they obediently crossed the river, after which the wagon was reloaded and the trip to Whitewood resumed, a trip which was never forgotten, for it took two whole days.

Holger Munch, in his homesteading days, also had a few very exasperating experiences with oxen. He considered all of them



stubborn and his own perhaps more so than many. One day he was doggedly following his plodding beasts, the lines thrown carelessly over his shoulders, when they began quite suddenly to run. Almost before he realized what was happening, he was standing in the middle of a slough. More at home with figures and books than with oxen, he decided the farm was not the place for him.

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When Alex Stenberg prepared to go to his fields to work, he took his gun as a matter of course. One fine day in October of 1902, he and his hired man went to stack sheaves, carefully placing the gun in the back of the rack. However, as the horses moved down a sharp incline, the gun discharged, striking Alex in the shoulder. As the day was chilly, he was dressed in very heavy clothing and it was these, with the big buckle on his suspenders, which saved his life by reflecting the pellets from the more vital regions to his shoulder. His wife Svea had no training as a nurse, but she did have natural skill and common sense and did what she could while a neighbor rode to Whitewood for a doctor. He, after dressing the wound, ordered the patient to be taken to Whitewood, so Mrs. Stenberg prepared for the trip. Alex was wrapped well and laid in the democrat and the trip was begun. Sometimes Alex raved and tried to jump out; at other times he lay in a stupor. His wife anxiously watched each stone and each rough spot on the long, weary road, always fearing her husband might die before they reached town. Suddenly a wheel hit a stone and she knew her husband was very much alive.

Once they had reached Whitewood, he was taken to Larry's boarding house, where he hovered between life and death. Then blood poisoning developed and the doctor sent him to hospital in Winnipeg, where it was feared he would lose his life or, at the very least, his arm. Alex fought a few verbal battles with the doctor who proposed amputation, but one morning the nurse prepared him for the operating room and, protesting vigorously, he was taken to where the white-gowned doctor awaited him. The sight of the room, the operating table and the doctor aroused the fighting spirit of the tough Swede; while he was being placed on the table, and while the doctor patiently tried to explain that the arm would have to go in order to save his life, Alex kept insisting, in language more forceful and sulphurous than polite, that he would keep his arm. The angry doctor stalked from the room and the patient, still with two arms, was returned to his bed. That day brought the beginning of an almost miraculous recovery, and shortly after the beginning of the new year he returned home, a well man. He looked strange to his children, for he had grown a beard, but everyone was happy that the family was reunited again, while in the kitchen stood the

fine new stove he had brought from Winnipeg.

\* \* \*

## HOME REMEDIES

In the early days in the colony, doctors were many miles away and the pioneers had to rely on home remedies. None had heard of allergies, vitamins or calories, but all ate the food they had with a total disregard of its food value and without a thought of its possible effect on their figures. Springtime meant sulphur and molasses, and doses of this nauseous mixture were forced down many unwilling throats, with the rebellious children often wondering why so few adults seemed to require this spring tonic.

A tablespoonful of black gunpowder, washed down with a copious drink of cold water, was an oldtime remedy for boils. A string tied tightly around one's little finger was guaranteed to stop one's nose from bleeding. And toothache was often relieved by covering the little finger with the membrane from inside an eggshell. To effect a cure, the sufferer had to cover the finger on the same side of the body as the aching tooth. The most stubborn sliver or thorn was quickly removed by covering it with heated shoemaker's wax.

A chokecherry tree not only delighted the eye in blossom time and later provided fruit for a tasty syrup, but its bark had medicinal properties and was used for the relief of many ailments. A tonic was made by boiling the bark and using the strained liquid. The inner side of the bark was often scraped off and used as a dressing for wounds which were slow to heal.

Linseed or bread poultices were used for boils or swellings, and a flannel soaked in goose oil was wound round the throat to relieve soreness. Steam was used to relieve croup, and the first requisite was a large kettle of boiling water. A limestone was placed in the water, and the kettle was set beside the child's bed, with a blanket arranged as a tent over kettle and patient. Limestone was thought to possess medicinal properties, but at least the steam soon relieved the croup.

In emergencies there was never a lack of capable helpers, for neighbors always responded to a call for help. Some were capable bonesetters, and among these was Mrs. Erik Wickberg. One day, while playing football, Mike Hoglund broke his leg, but Mrs. Wickberg set it so well that it gave him no further trouble; not only did this kindly woman set his leg, but she also took him into her home and looked after him. No doubt other women could set the bones, but Mrs. Wickberg did what seemed an impossibility to many when she set a bone in the leg of a colt. The break was between the knee and the shoulder, but it was set so well that the colt grew up to become one of Theo Moller's best work horses.

Hot onion poultices on the soles of the feet were used to reduce

fevers, and they were also used for stubborn chest ailments. Ear-ache could be cured with warm goose oil, while tobacco smoke blown into the aching ear was often an effective cure.

\* \* \*

## HOLIDAYS

The settlers in the colony continued to observe many of their old world customs. Easter was a time for quiet religious observance. There was no parade of finery when the people met for worship, and Good Friday was a day for quiet meditation. The children were dressed in their best clothes and all play was forbidden, so they found it a lonely day and referred to it as "long Friday". On May Day, the first of May, all the debris of winter was gathered into a pile and, when darkness fell, the young people joined hands and sang as they danced around the bonfire. Midsummer Day, the twenty-fourth of June, saw even the humblest home gaily decorated with poplar saplings and transformed for a day into a bower of beauty.

Christmas was the happiest season of the year, and a thorough housecleaning heralded its approach. The practice of giving gifts was not in vogue, but everyone had some new clothing to be worn for the first time on the afternoon of December 24th, after the family baths. Supper on Christmas Eve was a festive occasion, and a typical menu featured rice porridge, lutefisk, and a pudding made with fruit juice and flour which was very like the blanc mange of later years. After the first few years, this simple Christmas Eve supper came an elaborate feast, similar to the present Christmas Eve dinner in Swedish homes. Hazel nuts were gathered in the fall, to be saved for Christmas, but neither oranges nor candies were part of the Christmas fare in the early eighteen-eighties.

For some years the people gathered in various homes to celebrate the birth of Christ, but after the churches had been built the traditional six and eleven o'clock services were enjoyed on Christmas morning. Christmas concerts became very popular, with everyone of the community in attendance. The children, clothed in their very best, trod the boards and spoke their "pieces", which each member of their family knew equally well and silently repeated with them. The singing of the familiar carols brought the very spirit of Christmas within the walls of the prairie churches to a people whose ears had not been assailed for weeks by the blaring of radios, with their advertising of Christmas bargains mingled with the carols.

Christmas trees were not in general use, and it was some years before Santa Claus with his bag of gifts became a feature of these entertainments.

Before midnight on the thirty-first of December, the Lutheran church, its candles gleaming, was filled with worshippers come to give thanks for past blessings and to invoke God's blessing on the

year which lay before them. With the passing of midnight came the old familiar greeting "Gott Nytt År", then the sleigh loads of weary but happy folk went their way, with each departing group calling "Adju". New Year's Day was a time for entertaining friends, and there was an air of happy anticipation, for the shortest day of the year was past. Indeed, an old Swedish saying referred to this day as being "a rooster's track longer", while soon the days would be "a horse and carriage longer". When business firms began to give gaily colored calendars, New Year's Day saw the old ones discarded and the new ones taking their places. Some of these calendars featured copies of well-known and well-loved pictures and many oldtimers recall with pleasure the old calendars of the nineties.

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### BREAD MAKING

Bread making is an ancient rite, with people of all nations having their own particular breads. The "thin bread" of Sweden, once eaten, is never forgotten, and many sons and daughters of the colony, now living in faraway places, would be very disappointed if their mothers' Christmas parcels did not contain some of this delicacy. Is there any fragrance to equal that of homemade bread fresh from the oven, or anything more appetizing than a slice of bread from a crusty loaf, spread with fresh butter and Swedish cheese?

The quick-working yeasts of today have simplified bread making but you might like to try one batch made with hops in the old fashioned way. First you must pick hops from the vines which still grow in this district, then boil two ounces of hops in two quarts of water. Put one cup of brown sugar in a jar, then strain the water from the boiled hops into this jar. Add one cup of flour, stir into a smooth paste, and let the mixture stand in a warm kitchen until it ferments. Then add six potatoes, boiled and mashed, and a half cup of salt. One large cup of this yeast is sufficient for four large loaves of bread.

#### Swedish Thin Bread

2 cups water  
1 package Fleischmann's dry yeast  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup butter or other shortening  
1 level dessert spoon salt  
1 egg  
 $6\frac{1}{2}$  cups flour

Put one teaspoon of sugar in one-half cup of warm water, and add the yeast. To the remaining warm water add the butter, salt, beaten egg and part of the flour. Mix well. Then add the yeast and the remainder of the flour. Knead well. Let rise, then form into a long roll. Cut into eight or ten pieces. Place on a floured board and

roll with a Swedish rolling pin to the thickness of pastry. Place on the bottom of a hot oven and bake until delicately browned. Cut into pieces while hot. (Do not use a cookie sheet, as it needs to be hot enough to rise quickly).

Sara Erikson.

### **Swedish Kums**

Grate raw potatoes, and pour off some of the liquid. Add enough flour to form balls, but keep as soft as possible. Have some flour on a plate, and ladle a big spoonful into it, then place finely cut and seasoned fried pork in the middle, fold over carefully and form into balls. Place in a kettle of boiling water and boil for about one hour. These are most tasty when allowed to stand until cold, then sliced and fried in butter. Finally add rich milk and simmer. If to be used freshly boiled, they should be served with a sweet cream sauce, or with butter and syrup.

Sara Erikson.

### **Cranberries**

Homemakers in this district have always welcomed a bountiful yield of high bush cranberries, and they count scratches, bruises and torn clothing as incidental to a berry-picking outing, and a very small price to pay for the rich, glowing, reddish-gold fruit, which will appear later as jars of delicious jelly. Seventy years ago, this fruit added zest to the fall and winter meals, as well as supplying the necessary vitamins, and great quantities were gathered. Sometimes the cranberries were boiled in a kettle hung over an outdoor fire, not because of necessity but because work done on a warm, still autumn day delighted those who dearly loved the outdoors. The unsweetened sauce was poured into kegs or bottles and, when required for use, was gently simmered with the proper amount of sugar. Late in the fall, more berries were picked, cooked, placed in a barrel and frozen. When these were to be used, a small hatchet was used to cut out chunks of the frozen fruit, which was thawed and prepared for sauce or pies.

### **SOAP MAKING**

The old cookstoves in the early kitchens warmed the pioneers and spread a comfortable cheer during winter's short, cold days and long nights. The wood box was never empty, and the ashes from the stoves were carefully piled in a sheltered spot, safe from the whirling winds. When the warm days of spring came to the prairies, it was soap making time. A barrel was placed on a well-sheltered, sloping piece of ground, then filled with ashes, which were soaked with water, more being added each day. Everyone who passed, though intent on the many chores, paused to observe the ashes, and finally there would be a call, "the lye is running", and there it would be, seeping into the pans below the barrel.

Then came the day when everything was in readiness for the actual process of making the soap. Usually an outdoor fire was built, and over this was hung a big kettle. Into it was put all the carefully saved waste fats, the lye, and the required amount of water. A sharp, pungent odor soon filled the air, as the mixture reached the proper jellying stage, and it was then quickly removed from the fire and poured into boxes or kegs standing in readiness to receive the first "batch" of a year's supply of soap. And what soap it was! Dirt vanished in its wake, and it could have supplied suds for innumerable soap operas.

### SHOEMAKING

Many of the men and women in the colony could make shoes which were not only sturdy but attractive, and some children had reached their teens before owning their first pair of factory-made shoes. The leather was tanned at home, and the tanning process required much time and work. The hide was soaked at first in a strong solution of lime, another local product, for there were several lime kilns in the colony. After a thorough rinsing, it was placed in a barrel with willow bark and water, in which solution it was kept for several months. It was then removed and carefully scraped and, if a soft leather was required, it was rubbed with neatsfoot oil. The soles, however, were made from thick pieces of unsoftened leather. Lamp black applied to the finished product produced a good polish.

The neatsfoot oil was also a home product, produced by boiling the hooves of the animal whose hide had been tanned. The fat was skimmed from the water and allowed to stand until needed, then melted. The hooves also provided the pioneers with glue, for there was very little waste in those pioneer homes.

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### AND THESE CAME LATER

Isak William Isakson, with his wife and two children, arrived in Whitewood from Sweden in August of 1902. With three hundred dollars in his pocket, he looked forward to becoming very quickly a successful farmer. The Isaksons never lost sight of this goal and, through the combined efforts, eventually owned a section of land.

After locating a homestead, Isakson joined other local men who were helping build the railway line north of the colony, then being rushed to completion. His wife and family lived with the Nils Johansons during this time. They budgeted their money carefully and, after buying lumber for the roof and floor of their log house, bought a few necessary pieces of household furnishings. The cook stove, which cost them only fourteen dollars, remained in use for many years, and its oven baked innumerable loaves of delicious bread for the big Isakson family, which eventually numbered twelve, with ten of their fourteen children reaching adulthood.

A dollar and a half bought a young pig, assuring the Isaksons of a supply of meat, while seventy dollars was used to purchase two good cows, which provided milk and butter for the family, as well as surplus butter which was traded at the store for the family's groceries. Mrs. Isakson soon won a reputation as one of the district's champion buttermakers and a few years later, with an increased herd, she made twelve hundred pounds of butter in a single year, obtaining for it the highest price of the period, thirty-five and forty cents a pound.

By this time there was little of the three hundred dollars left, so Isakson went to work for a bachelor to get a yoke of oxen. When he attempted to break some land, these oxen proved too young for the work, but this Swede was not easily discouraged. He arranged to work for a local farmer named Lindebloom, who would do some breaking for him in return. The four acres broken that year and sown to wheat yielded seventy bushels which provided the next year's seed, a year's supply of flour, and fourteen dollars with which to buy a harrow. The young oxen were traded for a horse, and by the next spring they were able to buy another.

Mr. Isakson never shirked any task, and did his part in the development of the new country. He died at the age of seventy-three but Mrs. Isakson, although now seventy-eight, still trips round the village streets much as she did fifty years ago.

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Olaf Peter Anderson of Varmland, Sweden, and his wife, the former Johana Engelbretson of Oslo, Norway, came to the colony in 1902. None of their descendants remains in the district, and their old homestead now belongs to Frank Black, of Stockholm village.

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The year 1903 marked the arrival in Canada of a young Scot who, until his death in 1953 at the age of seventy-nine, exercised a tremendous influence on the life of Stockholm and district. William Laing came to join his brother, David, who had emigrated the previous year, and in 1906 their parents and other members of the family came to the farm home established by David and William. Everyone soon knew the young Scotchman, Bill Laing, and though his pride in his native country never weakened he was intensely loyal to his adopted land, and during the second World War knew a humble pride as he saw his only son in the uniform of the Royal Canadian Air Force.

During his first years in the district, he worked with road construction outfits and helped to build many badly needed roads. He took pride in work well done, and often referred to his road-building days when the money he earned helped to put the Laing farm on a paying basis. Before leaving Scotland, he had gained considerable

experience as a gardener, and after his arrival on the prairies he did much to promote an interest in gardening among his neighbors. He was keenly interested in the local fairs of the early days and gave freely of his time to travel from place to place as a judge of flower and vegetable exhibits.

In 1916 he moved to the village of Stockholm to begin his long career as a grain buyer, at first with the Co-op Elevator Company, then with its successor, Saskatchewan Pool Elevators, Limited. He continued with this company until his retirement, which was some time after the usual retirement age. At this time the company and the local Pool district honored him with gifts. During his long years in business, he won the respect of everyone and many came to him for counsel and, in hard times, for financial aid which he gave freely, often impoverishing himself to help others in need. Many young farmers of the district are former members of his Boys' Grain Club and remember his fine leadership and interest in their work. The entire farming community benefited from the improved seed grown on these plots.

In 1917 he married Augusta Landine, a daughter of the pioneer Landine family of Sorasele, Sweden, and they had one son and one daughter. For thirty-five years Bill Laing was the local agent for the Imperial Oil Company, and his big truck was used not only to transport drums of gasoline but also to take innumerable loads of children to school field days, picnics and ball games. He was the children's friend, and a picnic day usually found the "Laing truck" at a street corner, ready for a load of well scrubbed boys and girls. For many years he was an active member of the board of the United Church, the school board, the village council and the curling club. He was a life member of the Masonic Lodge, as well as a charter and honorary life member of the Dubuc Chapter, Order of the Eastern Stars. A lifelong Liberal, he was keenly interested in politics, both national and international.

Bill Laing lived a fine life, and although the last year or so found his movements somewhat restricted, his zest for living never waned and his days were never dull. The path to Bill and Gussie Laing's door was well trodden, and no one who ever heard Bill's greeting, "Sit ye doon", will ever forget it.

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In 1903, K. P. Landine of Sorasele, Sweden, with his wife and three young children, Charles, Augusta and Anna, arrived in White-wood in search of land. He had sold his farm of valuable timberland, and was lured to the New Stockholm colony by the reported freedom enjoyed in the new land, and by glowing tales of fortunes quickly made. The Landines had sufficient money to purchase a farm and some equipment, as well as to furnish their home, so they





Mr. and Mrs. Landine, Augusta, Charles, Annie, Alex and Viola

knew relatively little of the hardships of pioneering. However, they had been accustomed to the amenities of life in Sweden, and this life seemed hard, so that Mrs. Landine in particular wanted to return home. They planned at first to leave the colony at the end of two years. Mrs. Landine never forgot her first washday on the prairie, when her soft Swedish woollens emerged from the tub of hard water shrunken almost beyond recognition.

Three more children, Viola, Alex and Wilfred, were born to them, and gradually all thought of returning to Sweden faded from their minds. The years passed, and their holdings of land increased, while a large home added to their comfort. Landine was more interested in building than in farming, and the first storehouse he built on the farm provided almost perfect refrigeration, with meat, milk, cream and butter keeping perfectly even in the very hottest weather. Mrs. Landine was able to overcome many difficulties by sheer determination, and many remember her as a fine, kindly neighbor.

Kasper Persson Landine was a born fighter, ever ready to battle for what he believed right, and never swayed by public opinion. He was an earnest worker in the first Farmer's Union, which had been organized before he came to the colony, but when he felt that it was

causing some disunion in the district he moved that it be disbanded. He was an avid reader, and found pleasure and satisfaction in contributing articles to Swedish newspapers. When eighty years old, he learned to use a typewriter, and almost to the time of his death at the age of eighty-seven he derived enjoyment from his writing.

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Letters from relatives gave many Swedish lads an urge to seek their fortunes in the New Stockholm colony, and it was letters from his cousin, K. P. Landine, which persuaded Per Konrad Danielson, whose family had large holdings of land in Westerbotten, Sweden, to emigrate to the prairie of western Canada. There were no homesteads available when he arrived in April, 1904, so he bought a half section of unbroken land from the North West Land Company. He returned to Sweden and, while there, filed on a homestead (S. W. quarter, Section 4, Township 21, Range 3) which was several miles from the land he had purchased. On his return to Canada he lived with an English family, the Webbs, while he built a little home and prepared to fulfill his homestead duties. Unlike many of the pioneers, he had a sizeable bank account, and so was prepared for the many setbacks of homesteading.

While living on the homestead with his Swedish wife, Hilda, who had become his bride at barely seventeen in 1909, he grasped every opportunity to make money, and to become a successful farmer. His neighbors were glad to pay three dollars an acre for breaking, and with a sixteen inch plow and a yoke of oxen Per Konrad broke a thousand acres of land. In 1918 he built a house on the unbroken farm in the colony, and as soon as it was ready the family moved from the homestead and began to work on beautifying their surroundings. Many evergreens and other trees were planted in 1920, but all these and the house as well were destroyed in a terrible storm in 1922. Once again the Danielsons built a home and planted trees, many of the seven hundred being evergreens.

Always a keen judge and admirer of good horses, P. K. Danielson has happy recollections of his first purebred team, which he bought for one thousand dollars from a Scotchman, William Martin of Wapella. Eventually he owned twenty valuable horses, and it was a great financial loss when they all died from an undetermined poison.

The Danielsons had eleven children, of whom one son, Melvin, died overseas in the second World War, and is buried in Holland. The remaining children, and their father, survived their fine pioneer mother, who died in 1953. During these many years, this family has been actively connected with the local Lutheran church. Henry Van Dyke wrote: "He who planteth a tree is a servant of God; he provideth a kindness for many generations, and faces that he hath

not seen shall bless him". So it can be written of the Danielsons, whose tall majestic evergreens delight the eyes of many and are a living monument to people who found beauty in trees.

## THE COLONY TODAY

The narrow, winding trails one travelled by plodding oxen drawing wagons loaded with the pioneers and their belongings have been replaced by roads over which cars now travel at speeds undreamed of seventy years ago. An excellent gravelled highway, kept open the year around, gives easy access to the outside world. While a jolting democrat conveyed the colony's first accident victim to Whitewood for medical attention, today a modern, well-equipped hospital is within easy reach, and in emergencies the Saskatchewan Air Ambulance Service will pick up patients and fly them to the city hospitals.

Mixed farming predominates in this district, with the average farm being slightly over a half section in size and owned, in most instances, by descendants of the pioneers. The farms are mechanized, and fields which were broken by single-furrow plows are now cultivated by modern implements pulled by powerful rubber-tired tractors. Combines are gradually replacing threshing machines, and where once grain from these farms was hauled in two bushel bags to market, it is now rushed to granaries or elevators in trucks whose capacity is from fifty to three hundred bushels.

New generations have been born and come to maturity since the days of candles and kerosene lamps, and since the coming of the power lines of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation they are enjoying a greatly improved way of life. A love of singing was evidenced by the pioneers, and is still a marked characteristic of these people, with the choir of some thirty voices under the direction of Virgil Anderson and Erling Lindwall having delighted many audiences and also made several fine recordings.

Round Lake, one of the loveliest of the chain of lakes in the Qu'Appelle Valley, provides the residents of the colony with a happy vacation spot, just as it did their pioneering forefathers, and it also attracts many tourists who appreciate good fishing in tranquil surroundings. Sportsmen from as far away as California and Wisconsin, as well as from the neighboring states, join our local men in hunting the ducks, upland game birds and deer which are plentiful in the district. One of the colony's greatest assets is the gift of nature: the wooded Qu'Appelle hills, tree-shaded roads and the farmsteads with their natural shelter belts, all delight the eye of the beholder with their ever-changing beauty.

## VI.

# THE COLONY'S FIRST CHURCH

**F**OR two years, the settlers in the Swedish colony met in various homes for Bible study, and on only three occasions were they visited by ministers of the gospel. On June 30th, 1888, a meeting was called for the purpose of organizing a church, to be called the Scandinavian Christian Brotherhood. E. Zakrison was chosen as chairman, while A. G. Sahlmark was elected secretary and Sven Stromberg treasurer. However, the women who were present felt

that more serious consideration should be given to such a serious and important matter as organizing a Christian church, so they declined to become members of the congregation. The first Scandinavian Mission Church in Canada had been dedicated in Winnipeg in 1887, and many in the New Stockholm colony were interested in establishing a similar church. This matter grew, and on October 20th, 1888, a meeting was called to discuss the matter.



Evangelical Mission Church

At that time the following tenets or doctrines were adopted.

1. The Bible to be recognized as the only authentic authority for moral behavior.
2. The congregation to labor for God's Kingdom and to live according to God's Word.
3. Each person to experience conversion and to be baptized before becoming a member of the church.
4. New members to be accepted at regular meetings and after open confession of faith.
5. Members' names to be inscribed in the church membership book, and members thereafter to make annual contributions for the support of church work.
6. Stewards to be elected for the term of one year, and a minister to be elected by a two-thirds' majority vote.

After these doctrines were adopted, the women entered the congregation, but the secretary and one deacon, who had been elected at the previous meeting, withdrew. Thereupon C. O. Hofstrand was elected as secretary and Nils Johanson as vice-chairman.

The church met on November 8th, and C. O. Hofstrand was elected to serve as minister of the new congregation for an unspecified length of time. A petition was sent to the government, asking that he be given authority to perform marriage ceremonies in the colony. This request was granted and, although at this time he was not an ordained minister, the church permitted him to perform all the rites of the body.

Plans were made for the erection of a church, and E. Ohlen, who worked unceasingly for the welfare of the colony which, as land agent, he had helped to found, gave generously to the building fund and also secured contributions from interested people in Winnipeg as well as in Chicago, which was the headquarters for the Covenant Church. However, it was seven years before the congregation had their church building ready for dedication. The church was built of logs from the valley, with the work being done by the men of the congregation. Mr. and Mrs. Ohlen presented a beautiful pulpit Bible, while the two exquisite chandeliers which still hang in the little church were given by the Mission Church in Winnipeg. The services of dedication were held on August 3rd and 4th, 1895, with the minister in charge being H. Lindeman, assisted by C. O. Hofstrand and Johan Olson. Many devoted Christian ministers have served this church, but for some years it has been without a stationed pastor. The members have also served with zeal, and for over sixty years this church has stood as a simple monument to a pioneer people's faith in God.

\* \* \*

## THE SWEDISH LUTHERAN CHURCH

"Without a strong church, neither civilization nor democracy can survive".

The early years in the colony found the people not only struggling to achieve economic security, but also deeply concerned with their spiritual needs. Many of the early settlers had a great desire for the church of their fathers, the Swedish Lutheran, and so October 3rd, 1889 was a momentous day for the colony, as the people, many walking, others in wagons drawn by oxen, came from far and near to the home of E. Hammerstrom. There, under the direction of the Reverend G. S. Ryding, of the Minnesota Conference of the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the New Stockholm Lutheran congregation was organized.

Men and women alike were deeply moved as they signified their



**First Lutheran Church**

desire to become members of this congregation, and today their descendants view with pride and thankfulness the ninety-eight names inscribed on that Charter Roll. They are: J. Teng, his wife Ingeborg, and family; Olaf Teng and his wife, Barbara; John Nelson Berglund, his wife Karin, and family; Ingle P. Sjodin, his wife Johanna, and family; Jonas P. Norden; Erick Christopherson, his wife Martha Christian, and family; Ingle Kaspar Englebreton, his wife Gurina, and family; Frans E. Lindquist; John Olson; Olaus Olson; Anders Jonson, his wife Elin, and family; P. Peterson, his wife Anna Palina, and family; Olaf Nelson, his wife Lisa, and family; Nils Arvidson; Erick A. Berg, his wife Christina, and family; Adam P. Sjostrom, his wife Lisa, and family; Zackarias Oslund, his wife Elizabeth, and family; Erick Hammerstrom; Anders G. Sahlmark, his wife Kate, and family; Erick Johanson, his wife Helena Sophia, and family; John Hanson; Johan Hanson, his wife Maria, and family; P. A. Norlin, his wife Martha Britta; Erick Jonson Wickberg, his wife Anna Britta, and family. Many of the children and grandchildren of these pioneer church members are today faithful workers in the church which was organized nearly seventy years ago.

The chairman of the first elected board was A. G. Sahlmark, while J. Teng was secretary. The deacons were elected for one, two and three year periods, and were Messrs. Zacharias Oslund, J. Teng, A. G. Sahlmark, E. Christopherson, A. P. Sjostrom and Olaf Teng. The trustees were similarly elected, and were E. J. Wickberg, Kaspar Englebreton, and P. A. Norlin. On November 30th,

1889, a congregational constitution was adopted, and this New Stockholm Evangelical Lutheran Church petitioned for membership in the Minnesota Conference of the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

For some time, services were held in the various homes, but the people constantly pressed forward toward their goal, the building of a church in which to worship. In 1891, the government granted them forty acres of land to serve as the site of a church and a parsonage, as well as a burial ground. Two years later, a congregational meeting was called and definite plans were made regarding the building of a church. Ingle Sjodin, J. Johanson, J. Westerlund and Alex Stenberg were appointed to look after building supplies, and arrangements were made to have sufficient lime in readiness for building the foundation. Men worked practically day and night at the local lime kilns to ensure that there would be enough lime on hand to complete the job once it had been begun. On June 6th, 1893, the work of laying the foundation was begun under the supervision of E. A. Berg.

The very finest logs in the valley were used in building this church, which was to be fifty by thirty-two feet in size, with eight large windows, eight feet tall and slightly over three feet wide, and two large doors for the western entrance. The construction was done by the men of the congregation, working under the supervision of men skilled in different trades. P. J. Seline and J. Johanson were responsible for the hand-sawn timber, and N. Berglund, E. A. Berg and A. Hoglund were in charge of the plastering and stonemasonry. E. Zakrisson and J. Teng made the sturdy pews, some of which are still in use in the basement of the present church. Church history was being made as the people labored, for this prairie church was the first of the Augustana Synod to be built on Canadian soil, and in 1913, within its walls the Lutheran Canada Conference was organized.

In 1895 the congregation was visited by the Reverend Carl Collins of the Minnesota Conference, who examined the confirmation class of ten who, with the newcomers to the district, were received into church membership in a ceremony held in Svea School. The church members then partook of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Later in the day, many gathered in the church grounds, part of which was then consecrated for use as a cemetery, in a ceremony performed by the Reverend Mr. Collins, assisted by A. G. Olson and the Board of Deacons. The Reverend Mr. Collins had advised the church board to engage Mr. Olson as their lay minister, and they had accepted his advice, so from 1895 to 1899 A. G. Olson ministered to the congregation of the New Stockholm Lutheran Church.

July 26th, 1896 was a day of general rejoicing among the members

of this church, for their work was completed and all was in readiness for the service of dedication. The church was filled long before ten o'clock, the hour of worship, and present with their minister, A. G. Olson, were two Lutheran pastors. Reverend E. Norelius, D.D., President of the Minnesota Conference, had charge of the morning communion service, and his sermon was preached from a text based on the first chapter of the Book of John, verses eight and nine. Reverend S. Udden of Winnipeg officiated at the first baptism in the new church, when Mr. and Mrs. Olson presented their infant daughter, who was named Olga Isabella. He also preached a sermon, taking as his text verses twelve and fourteen of the seventh chapter of Matthew.

Following these services, the congregation was served a wonderful banquet at long tables under leafy bowers. The Ladies Aid, which had been organized the previous year, received great praise for the bounteous repast, served in such beautiful surroundings. In the afternoon, the solemn service of dedication was performed by Dr. Norelius, in accordance with the ritual of the Lutheran Church. He was assisted by the Reverend Mr. Udden and by A. G. Olson. Dr. Norelius took as his text the eleventh verse of the eighty-fourth psalm. A short historical sketch of the church was given by the Reverend Mr. Udden, and the unaccompanied congregational singing was of unusual beauty and added greatly to the services held that day.

On the morning of Sunday, June 28th, in the following year, Anna Britta Swenson, as president of the Ladies Aid, presented the church with an organ, the gift of the ladies of the congregation. Mr. Olson accepted the gift, expressing the warm thanks and the deep appreciation of the congregation for their generosity and thoughtfulness. This little organ is still in fairly good condition and stands in the church basement, where it is used occasionally.

As the membership of the church grew, there was in evidence a strong desire for a resident ordained minister, and a call for one was made to the Minnesota Conference. However, the lack of a parsonage prevented ministers who otherwise were interested in this field from accepting a call. From 1899 until 1903, the congregation was without a stationed minister, but many visiting pastors conducted services. In 1903, the Reverend N. Leyhart of Fosston, Minnesota accepted a call and preached his first sermon in the New Stockholm Lutheran Church on the first Sunday in April. He was welcomed the following Thursday afternoon by the church board and the congregation. Because of the warmth of his welcome, it is recorded here.

Pastor Leyhart was a guest in the Berg home, and after the people had assembled in the church the secretary, J. Teng, walked to the



Berg's and escorted him to the church, where he was met by the chairman of the board, M. A. Lindebloom, and escorted to the front of the church. The congregation rose and sang one verse of "O God, whose shepherds giveth", and Mr. Lindebloom welcomed Mr. Leyhart on behalf of the congregation, after which the children sang a selection. The Reverend Hugh Mackay, from the Indian Mission School, gave the main address of welcome, mentioning his sympathetic accord with the work of the Lutheran Church, and also the great service it was destined to accomplish in the community. He charged the minister to faithfully carry on the great work already begun, and emphasized to the congregation the great need of loyalty to the minister and of consecrated service to the church. A. G. Sahlmark spoke words of appreciation, and also gave an historical sketch of the church. At this point, Mrs. E. J. Wickberg presented the minister with a gift of money from the congregation. Mr. Leyhart was deeply affected by the many spontaneous expressions of welcome, and his reply made a lasting impression on the people to whom he was to minister for so many years. Mr. Lindeblom then invited the people to leave their pews and meet the minister, after which they enjoyed lunch. Following this social period, the Reverend Mr. Leyhart gave a short address and prayer, and the secretary of the church noted in the church record, "the people departed to their homes with deep thankfulness in their hearts that they at last had their own pastor".

In 1906 the parsonage was built, with Pastor Leyhart's young wife, the former Anna Stromberg, daughter of Mrs. P. J. Seline and the late Sven Stromberg, being its first mistress. The Leyharts were followed by the Reverend P. A. Edquist and family, who remained from 1908 to 1914. This was a very musical family, and during his pastorate the church choir, under Pastor Edquist's skillful and vigorous training, reached new peaks of achievement and beauty. It was also during this time that tentative plans were made for the building of a new church. A meeting was called, and P. J. Seline, John Erickson and Jonas Johanson were appointed to canvass for the church building fund. During the ministry of the Reverend O. E. Olman, in the period between 1915 and 1919, the basement was built, E. A. Berg being in charge. Tenders for the construction of the church were invited, and that of Carl Larson of Esterhazy was accepted. The Reverend Mr. Olman did not remain to see the church completed, and it was during the ministry of his successor, the Reverend C. G. Gronberg, that the present beautiful edifice was finished and dedicated on May 22nd, 1921, with the Reverend A. A. Brandelle, President of the Augustana Synod, in charge.

The congregation of this church has been faithfully served by many ministers, and among those who came after the dedication of

the church are the Reverends R. O. Keiding, N. G. Lundahl, J. A. Vikman, Herman Anderson, William Peterson and Alfred B. Sander. The last-named is the first Canadian-born and Canadian-trained pastor who has served this church.

The New Stockholm Lutheran Church, located about eight miles southeast of the village of Stockholm, has witnessed many notable



**New Lutheran Church**

events within its walls. In 1939 it celebrated its golden anniversary, and in the month of May in that memorable year the Lutheran Canada Conference met there, on the same sacred ground on which it was organized in 1913. The church, visible for miles, is a well known landmark and stands as a witness to a people's belief and faith in God.

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### **STOCKHOLM UNITED CHURCH**

The early settlers of the village of Stockholm were, for the most part, Protestants, but they were not mainly the adherents or mem-



**Stockholm United Church**

bers of any one denomination. The Reverend Hugh MacKay of the Round Lake Indian Mission encouraged them to unite and to organize a Presbyterian congregation, and in September of 1904 the people gathered within the walls of the present United Church to share in the simple and deeply moving dedicatory service conducted by the Rev. Mr. MacKay.

Alex Stenberg, a pioneer farmer and merchant, was instrumental in securing a free building site, while local men did much of the building and contributed money to the building fund. Generous contributions were made by Rev. MacKay and by William Cosgrave of the Sumner district. An old record lists the following as being the first members or adherents of this church: Mr. and Mrs. Alex Stenberg, Mrs. Gale and her son, John D. Gale, Mr. and Mrs. D. Lamont, Mr. D. S. Macdonald, Mr. William Laing, Mr. David Laing, Mr. and Mrs. A. G. Anderson, Mr. Harry Crowell, Mrs. Kvinlaug and family, Mr. and Mrs. William Shepherd, Mr. T. S. Brunskill, Mr. and Mrs. E. Erikson, Mr. and Mrs. V. Moller, Mr. and Mrs. Alex Patterson, Mr. and Mrs. J. Burnside, Miss Goldsmith, and Messrs. Tom Bateman, John Hilton, Fred Gent, William Mappin, Gustaf Persson and Godfrey Persson.

The great tradition of Presbyterian worship and church government was continued here until 1925, when the majority of the Methodist, Congregational and Presbyterian churches of Canada joined to form a new religious denomination known as the United Church of Canada. Many men have ministered devotedly to this congregation,

and the present minister is the Rev. Stewart Dingwall, a graduate of St. Andrew's College, Saskatoon. It was during the pastorate of a lay minister, the late Mr. Johnson, who was untiring in his labors for the welfare of this church, that its present simple furnishings were obtained. The pulpit, pulpit chairs and altar railings came from the former Methodist church in Carnduff, while the pews were the gift of a former Presbyterian church in Quebec. The church secretaries have, with one or two exceptions, been businessmen of the village, one of the first being D. S. Macdonald, while the present secretary is W. S. Persson.

The years have brought many changes to the village, and membership in the church has decreased, but the fine spirit of Christian fellowship which has always characterized the congregations of this church continues, and the minister and his parishioners enjoy a happy relationship. For over fifty years the local Sunday School has given religious instruction to the Protestant children of the village and the district and, though attendance has varied as the population of the village has waxed and waned, there have been a few faithful teachers ready to carry on the work. Mrs. Sara Erikson and Mrs. J. D. Gale hold the record for length of service, while the two teachers at present are Mrs. R. L. Jacobson and Mrs. V. Paynter.

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### THE BAPTIST CHURCH

July 5th, 1914 was a momentous day for those of the Baptist faith living in the Stockholm district. The Reverend J. P. Sundstrom had



Baptist Church

been invited to come to Winnipeg to meet them for the purpose of organizing a congregation. Prior to this meeting, held in the home of Gootfred Tranberg, a baptismal service had been conducted by Mr. Sundstrom at Round Lake. The five baptized were Gootfred and Anthonia Tranberg, Fritjog Hollander, Kristine Goranson and Oscar Gunnerfeldt, and these,

with six others of the Baptist faith, some of whom lived at Earl Grey and Edenland, comprised the congregation. E. J. Carstein was elected president, while Oscar Gunnerfeldt was the first secretary and Miss Kristine Gorenson became the first treasurer. The two deacons were Messrs. Nysted and Forsman. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was then observed, and following this the people, standing in a circle with hands clasped, heard the Reverend Mr. Sundstrom invoke a blessing on the newly formed congregation.

Mr. Corstein, under the supervision of Reverend Sundstrom, ministered to the congregation until early in 1915, when Alfred Johnson of Brandon College became the resident minister. The church purchased two acres of land from N. P. C. Neilson, and plans were made for building a church. On July 2nd, 1916, the present Baptist Church was dedicated, and grounds were consecrated for a cemetery. This Baptist church belonged at first to the Baptist Union Conference of Canada, but is at present a member of the Baptist Central Conference of America.

The six ladies of the congregation met at Eric Gustafson's on August 2nd, 1914 to organize a Ladies Aid Society. Miss Anthonia Tranberg was its first president, and Miss Kristine Gorenson was elected to fill the offices of secretary and treasurer. The first Sunday School was organized on April 22nd, 1917, with Pastor Alfred Johnson as superintendent and Anthonia Tranberg as secretary-treasurer. In 1929 the young student pastor succeeded in forming an active Young People's Baptist Society.

In 1917 the membership of this congregation was reduced through the withdrawal of members from Govan and Strasbourg, who then formed another congregation. In September of 1944 the church celebrated its thirtieth anniversary and was also host to the semi-annual Baptist Conference. A fund for building a parsonage was opened and in 1948 the work was begun, but it was not completed until 1950 when, in December, the present comfortable parsonage was dedicated.

Throughout the years, many earnest pastors have ministered to this congregation, the latest being the Reverend E. Avey. At the present time the church, whose membership has dwindled as Baptist families have moved from the district, is without a pastor, but the three remaining families of the Baptist faith look forward to the time when regular services will be resumed.

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## SCHOOLS

The earliest days in the North West Territories saw both religious services and education supplied through the missions or private schools, but this soon proved inadequate for the rapidly expanding population. Education was one of Governor Laird's first interests, and while the North West Territories Act had given the power to assess for schools only to electoral districts, he urged an amendment which would allow any settlement which wished to form a school district to assess themselves. Participation of the Territorial Government in educational affairs had begun in 1880 when the government began to pay half the teacher's salary in any school having a minimum daily attendance of fifteen pupils. The schools

thus assisted had been established under private auspices. The ordinance which finally established a public school system subsidized by the Government was passed by the North West Council just two years before the first settlers arrived at New Stockholm. The first four districts to be set up under the new ordinance were established in 1884, and Broadview, forty miles southwest of Stockholm, was one of a large group established in 1885. Three years later, in 1888, Nya Stockholm became the first school to be established locally. It was followed in 1890 by Svea, in 1901 by Scandia, in 1903 by Excel, and in 1905 by the Stockholm Public School.

### **New Stockholm S. D. No. 120**

When the New Stockholm Colony was settled, the people were deeply concerned over the lack of educational facilities for their children. In 1888 they held a meeting and a petition signed by Zacharias Bergman, Kasper Inglebretson and Charles Sahlmark, requesting permission to form a school district, was forwarded to the



**New Stockholm S. D. No. 120**

government. This request was granted and on May the fifth, 1888, the New Stockholm School District became the one hundred twentieth in the territory of Assiniboia.

Its limits were set forth as sections 7-9-16-21-28-33 in Tp. 18, R. 2, and sections 12-13-23-26-35-36 and that portion of section 14, not included in the Indian Reserve in Tp. 18, R. 3, West 2nd meridian.

The members of the first school board were Nils Johanson, A. G. Sahlmark and Charles Sahlmark.

The school, a sturdy log building, heated by a wood burning stove, was ready for opening the following year. Selma Sahlmark, who had a provisional certificate, was the first teacher and was paid a salary of twenty five dollars per month. The Territorial Government contributed a grant of sixty dollars for the quarter of the year the school was open. Eighteen pupils were registered and the average attendance was eleven.

Th school was closed from Sept. 30, 1889 to March 31, 1890, when Alberta Winters, who had a third class certificate, was engaged to teach. She was paid thirty two dollars per month and taught until June 30, 1890. The register showed nineteen pupils, with an average attendance of twelve.

The teachers' salaries in the North West Territory of Assiniboia were increasing. W. D. McIntosh, with only a provisional certificate, was paid forty dollars per month and he taught in the New Stockholm School for a total of one hundred thirteen days, in the term from July 1, 1890 to June 30, 1891. Mr. John Hewgill, Inspector of schools for East Assiniboia, inspected the school that year and reported that it opened for the summer on May 11, 1891 and would continue in operation for six months.

About 1895 the ratepayers of the district decided to move the school from its site near the valley to its present location. Many men and several yokes of oxen were required for the moving "bee", which was accomplished without accident, and the school stands today where it was placed over sixty years ago. The sturdy logs have long since been sheathed with lumber, and the old stove, which never quite heated the far corners of the room, has been replaced with an oil burning unit.

In a time when so many of the country schools have been closed, the people of this district take pride in the continuous operation of their school. Each year students from this country school leave in pursuit of higher education and many achieve success in various fields of work.

### **Svea S. D. No. 139**

The second school district in the colony first consisted of the following tracts of land: sections 34-35 Tp. 18, Rg. 2, sections 2-3-4-5-6, the fractional sections 7-8-9-10-11 Tp. 19, Rg. 2 and sections 4-5-6



**Svea S. D. No. 139**

Tp. 19- Rg. 2, west 2nd meridian and the name suggested was "The Svea Protestant Public School District of the North West Territories."

The ratepayers held their first meeting on Sept. 24, 1888 at the home of C. O. Hofstrand, who was appointed secretary, as well as trustee. The other trustees were Alex Stenberg and Eric Zakrisson. The school was named Svea in honor of the wife of the first chairman.

It was not until 1892 that the school house was finally ready for classes, but in 1891 the board rented a room in the C. O. Hofstrand home and engaged Anna Hendrickson of Whitewood as the first teacher.

Men who served as board members included Alex Stenberg, Axel

Olson, C. O. Hofstrand, Eric Zakrison, E. Christofferson, O. E. Pearson, Axel von Holstein-Rathlou, Eric Wickberg and S. E. Svedberg. Very complete records have been kept of this school and, except for the year 1914, it has been in continuous operation since 1891. During these years it has had forty-four fully qualified teachers and one supervisor, with its present teacher being Mrs. Esther Olson Hanson, who is a daughter of a former pastor in the colony.

Pupils from this school have been scholarship winners, and the residents of the district are proud of the record of this little country school in its more than sixty five years.

### Scandia S. D. No. 676

The first classes for the children of this district were held in the home of Nils Dahl. The children were all seated at a large home-made table and classes were conducted by a young man from On-



Scandia S. D. No. 676 — Built 1901

tario. Scandia's first trustees were Nils Dahl, V. T. Moller and John Persson.

Many of the teachers in the early years following the building of the school house in 1901, were young men from Ontario, who were thankful for the opportunity to teach from May until the beginning of October, thus earning money to enable them to continue at University. Some were outstanding and conscientious teachers, but others were mediocre and did little for the children, who were struggling to cover a year's work in a few months.

In 1928 the present modern school was built on a site about a mile and a half south of the location of the first school.





Scandia S.D. No. 676 — Built 1928

### Excel S. D. No. 894

The Eriksons, Rydbergs and Johnsons were no sooner settled north of the area which became Stockholm village than they began to feel concern regarding the education of their children. All three fathers signed a petition to organize a school district and this was sent in 1903 to the Commissioner of Education for the Northwest Territories. The petition was approved on September 9th of the same year, and one acre on the Rydberg farm was measured off as the proposed site of the school. The name of the school these folk had attended in Minnesota was "Excel", and some nostalgic sentiment prompted them to give their new school the same name, so Excel S. D. No. 894 became the fourth school district to be organized in this locality.

The first board members were Gust Erikson, John Torrance and F. E. Rydberg, the latter being chairman. The first secretary-treasurer was Algot Rydberg. A tax rate of three cents per acre or \$4.80 per quarter section was agreed upon, and by March plans for a school house had been made and the board was empowered to issue a debenture for \$500. Gust Erikson was awarded the contract to deliver stones suitable for the foundation, for a total of \$2.80, and since there were no stone piles from which to select them it was necessary to search the prairie for them. Harold Sundberg, then employed by Gust, was one of the "hunt and pick" crew which delivered the stones, and it was a two day expedition. The building contract went to Algot Rydberg for \$84.00, with the wages being

shared evenly with K. F. Sundberg and Hans Johnson. The building was completed at a total cost of \$534.68, and they built such a sturdy little edifice that, with very little alteration, it stands today as it did then. The workers were not only efficient, but also speedy, for only forty-five days passed from the awarding of the contract on June 3rd to the opening of the school on July 19th.

Mary Edith Walker was engaged as the first teacher, at a salary of \$580.00 per annum, and during the first year she boarded in the village and walked the four miles to and from school each of the

112 days it was in session. The fourteen pupils who were enrolled at the opening of the school were: Ehard Anderberg; Fred and Richard Brousseau; Ella Erikson; Elin, Olof and Tena Johnson; Albin, Hilda, Mina, and Oscar Rydberg; and Irma and Sigurd Sundberg. The present classes are under the direction of Madeleine Antalpi, daughter of a local farmer. The



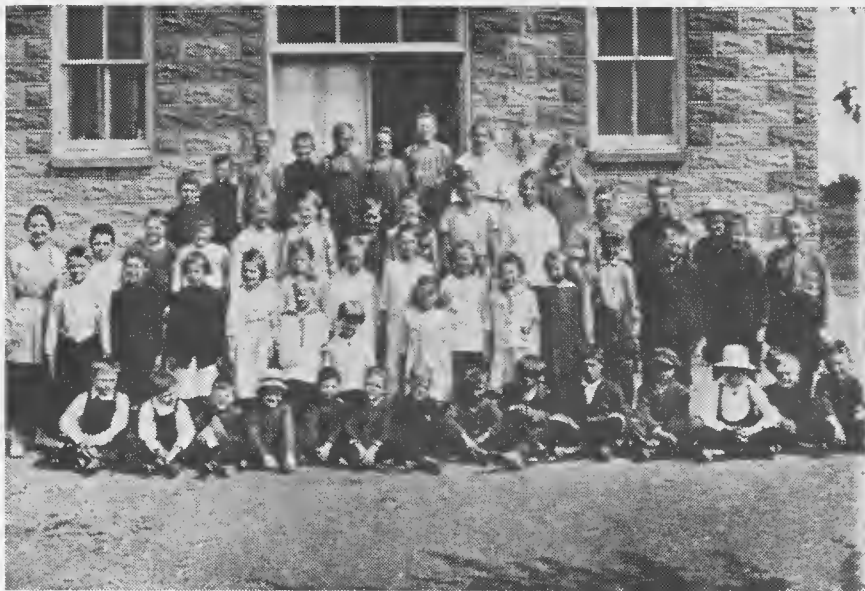
**Excel S. D. No. 894**

district is indebted to Harold Sundberg, who has carefully preserved the earliest records.

### **Stockholm Public S. D. No. 1285**

Present at the first ratepayers' meeting, held on April 25th, 1905 to organize a village school district, were: W. A. Lamont, W. E. Sheppard, D. Lamont, A. Stenberg, J. Persson and H. C. Young. All signed the declaration required by the school ordinance, and in the poll which followed fourteen votes were cast, all in favour of the motion.

The first trustees to hold office were H. C. Young, chairman, W. A. Lamont, secretary, and A. Kish. They held their first board meeting on June 2nd, and a letter from the Department of Education, dated May 10th, which announced the establishment of Public School District 1285 was read and filed. They decided to engage a teacher for six months, and the application of Miss Violet E. Goldsmith was accepted. At a meeting on August 1st, the school tax rate was set at \$5.00 per quarter section for farmers, with the village to be responsible for raising the balance. Taxes collected for the first year amounted to \$112.00 rural and \$125.00 urban. That winter, the board decided to operate a yearly school, and the first annual meeting was held on January 10th, 1906, when it was decided to hold annual meetings. Fritz Stenberg became the first caretaker, for which duties he received \$1.50 per month.



Stockholm Public S. D. No. 1285 — 1919

The first school sessions were held in the Presbyterian church, for which a monthly rental fee of \$15.00 was paid. Classes for the first three months of 1906 were held in a room rented from Sam Stevenson above his furniture store, but they were then moved back to the church. Feeling that the best interests of neither the students nor the church were being served by this system, the first discussion about building a school was held on March 2nd, 1907, following which they immediately set about planning the new building. On April 23rd a meeting was held at which a motion to build a concrete block schoolhouse was passed. On demand, a poll was held in Crosswell's Hall on May 8th, and eight votes were cast, all in favour of the venture.

The board advertised for tenders for the erection of a cement block building to measure forty by twenty-six feet, with a full basement and first and second stories. The building contract went to John England of Dubuc for \$140.35, while the contract for excavating the cellar went to A. Barton. P. Johnson of Dubuc hauled the gravel at \$1.00 a load, his bill amounting to \$75.75, while the plastering was done by John Crosswell. A lot, one hundred feet square, was obtained from the C.P.R. land department for \$75.00, and a cement block machine was purchased for \$150.00, with the cost of cement, which had to be ordered from Fort William, amounting to \$281.80.

The board member who had the most children who would benefit immediately from the school, Eric Erikson, was entrusted with the job of overseer, and he performed his supervisory duties so well that

the first floor room was ready for occupancy on September 8th, 1908, in spite of the fact than in 1907 the unusually early killing frost halted all work from October 5th until spring. The first tax assessment was conducted in 1908, and a five and one-half mill rate was struck. The sum of \$4000.00 was raised by debentures to finance the construction, the first \$1500.00 being borrowed immediately to commence operations, with a further \$1500.00 being taken the next summer with the mistaken hope that it would enable them to complete and furnish the building. A third installment of \$1000.00 was borrowed in 1909 to pay for completing the second floor, installing a furnace, digging a well and fencing the grounds. The heating contract went to Joe Lamont of Whitewood, who installed a unit of twenty-nine thousand cubic feet capacity for \$300.00.

Twenty ratepayers attended the annual meeting in 1909, when it was suggested that the village should make more use of the school-house for community gatherings. It was decided that they should charge a rental fee of \$3.00 before 7 p.m. and \$5.00 after 7 p.m., for all users. A sectional bookcase and books for a library were ordered. In June the Knights of Pythias rented the upper room for the last half of the year for the sum of \$50.00, with the board stipulating that if dances were to be held the floor must be strengthened. To promote good attendance, prizes of \$4.00, \$3.50 and \$2.50 were offered in 1909, and in the same year the assessment rate was raised to ten mills. The second floor was again rented to the Knights of Pythias for the whole of the next year for \$100.00, to be paid quarterly. Apparently the Knights had a bad year, as the rent was not forthcoming, but the school board was a group of men not to be trifled with so they dislodged their tenants and seized some of the property in lieu of rent. The teacher, a married man named Shaw, was then allowed to use the premises as living quarters.

In 1911, to encourage participation in the local brass band, the upper room was loaned for band practice, the only charge being that band members supply their own light and accept the responsibility of keeping the room clean. In the following three years, the second floor was used more frequently as a hall, and three dozen chairs were purchased. The Agricultural Society met there, and there were dances and shows at frequent intervals. A rent of \$3.00 was charged for meetings, and \$5.00 for shows and dances, and a caretaker was hired, to be paid \$1.00 for dances and 75 cents for other entertainments. But by 1913 the lower classroom was becoming crowded, and in the next year another classroom was opened, with another ply of lumber being added to the walls of the upper room. Since it was now warmer, the primary room was located there.

G. L. Wahlberg was the first truant officer, appointed in 1915. In that year the assessment was increased to twelve mills, and the

trustees, taking a more active interest in school affairs, decided to visit the school weekly, on a turnabout basis. From 1918 to 1924 the school operated once again on a one room basis. An additional acre of land was purchased from the C.P.R. for \$325.00 in order to provide a larger playground. An outside fire escape was erected to the second floor in 1923, and the lower room was relined with V-joint lumber, an unsightly product of the times which found little favour with housewives, particularly at housecleaning time, but which the men installed nevertheless, as they considered it a heat-retaining finish. The two rooms were again in operation, but on the recommendation of the inspector the primary room remained on the first floor. In 1926, the Separate School District was organized, and the reduction in public school attendance brought the board to decide on operating but one room again.

The first school nurse to make an appearance was Miss E. J. Wood, who called in 1927. In the same year the basement was dug deeper and cement floor and indoor toilets were installed. Two years later a new Torrid Zone furnace was installed by Blythe and Company, Esterhazy, for \$460.00. By 1931, the natural increase of school-age children was sufficient to warrant operating two rooms again. The new principal, Ian McKenzie, one of the most proficient teachers the school has had, did extracurricular work with the students along two lines of endeavour. He organized a sports club, which held meetings in Stenberg's Hall, at which the boys became quite proficient at bar work and pyramid building. The second interest was the hobby of bug and butterfly collecting, and the mothers of the budding entomologists had to become accustomed to changed surroundings. It was not an unusual experience for them to be going upstairs and to meet a worm or caterpillar coming down. Mr. McKenzie also started a school newspaper, edited by the students, which endeavour was continued sporadically through the years. The two school boards arranged to have educational films shown in the Community hall in 1945, sharing the expenses.

During the war years, the population of the village dwindled, and in 1948 arrangements were made with the Separate School board whereby any public school students were allowed to enroll in the high school department of the Separate School. With the electrification of the village in 1949, the school was wired and fluorescent lighting was installed.

Other teachers throughout the years who deserve special mention for their exceptional ability include: Miss Iris Hadland, under whose able guidance the high school reached its highest academic standing, and whose girls' choir sang in the United Church and at concerts to the delight of their audiences; the late James Taylor, principal from 1932 to 1937, was interested in all branches of sport and,

during his sojourn here, the local school students ranked high among winners at all district sports meets; he also took an active part in all village activities. His term as teacher was exceeded only by Mrs. S. Stenberg who, as Goldie McFarlane taught in 1924 and 1926, and as Mrs. Stuart Stenberg from 1927 to 1930.

Alex Stenberg served the longest term as secretary-treasurer, ten years, and as trustee, twenty years. W. S. Persson, with fourteen years as trustee, ranks second in length of service, with Mrs. Sara Erikson leading the lady members with nine years as a member of the board. Miss Evelyn Campbell served the second longest engagement as secretary-treasurer, from 1946 to 1953.

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## CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

### United Church Ladies' Aid

Five years after the dedication of the Presbyterian (now the United) Church, the women of the congregation organized a society which has for forty-seven years been known as "The Ladies' Aid of Stockholm". Their stated aim was... "to work for the support of the church and for local relief". It is largely through their efforts that the church stands free from debt. Two of the charter members, Mrs. A. G. Anderson and Mrs. Sara Erikson, still live in the village and continue as active members. Mrs. Erikson has been the faithful president for all these years, while Mrs. J. D. Gale had been the secretary for very many years.

During the early years, the society met twice monthly, and large quantities of handwork were done in preparation for the annual bazaar, which was one of the big events of the year. The group also sponsored many evenings of first class entertainment, by both local artists and the many excellent travelling artists of that period. The present society meets monthly, and for several years has been affiliated with the Women's Missionary Society.

In 1918, the younger ladies of the congregation formed a society to assist in church work and presented the organ to the church. Mrs. William Laing, Sr., the late Mrs. Holger Munch, and girls from the Holstein, Anderson, Stenberg, Erikson and Dahl families were among its active members.

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### Viking Temperance Society

For many years, there was a very active temperance society in the colony; a hall was built, and the society was incorporated according to law under the name of the Viking Temperance Society. It is reliably stated that all members of the Swedish Mission Church be-

longed, as well as a few others. The society continued to be very active until the time of prohibition; then, feeling there was no longer any need for their work, the members disbanded. The property was sold, and the proceeds were divided between the two churches.

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### **Red Cross Society**

The local Red Cross Society was reorganized in 1939 and, during the war years, was one of the most active in the province. The members assumed full responsibility for the annual drives, and a total of about \$9,000 was forwarded to the provincial headquarters in Regina. Each month a different group undertook a money-making project, and great mountains of finished flannelette garments, quilts and knitted goods were forwarded regularly to the Regina supply depot. In addition to this work, the members made layettes for overseas, supplying all necessary materials. They packed innumerable parcels of clothing for our needy allies, and each year packed ditty bags for the navy. Letters of thanks came from many quarters of the globe. Despite the constant feeling of anxiety which prevailed throughout those years, and the sorrow which came to many homes, the monthly meetings were well attended and people found solace in working for others. Mrs. William Laing, Sr., Mrs. D. S. Macdonald and the late Mrs. Holger Munch were the efficient presidents during the war years, with Mrs. J. Halliwell serving as secretary-treasurer.

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### **Homemakers' Club**

The Stockholm Homemakers' Club was organized in 1949, under the direction of Mrs. Herbert Calver, and has sponsored many worthy projects and assisted other societies in community work. The members are actively interested in the rehabilitation of the mentally ill, and send quantities of reading material, as well as individually wrapped Christmas parcels, to the Provincial Hospital, Weyburn. Scholarships have been given to local Grade Twelve students, and each school in the district receives subscriptions to the nature magazine, "Blue Jay". The nearest hospital, St. Anthony's in Esterhazy, receives a yearly fruit shower, and the children in the Red Cross Hospital in Regina are also remembered.

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### **Patriotic League**

An organization known as the Patriotic League was formed at the beginning of the second World War by four young matrons, Goldie Stenberg, Violet Junek, Corinne Jacobson and Zetta Persson, for the purpose of giving special attention to the comfort of recruits from the district. To embark on this project, over one hundred dollars was raised by subscription, after which a white elephant auction

sale netted \$105. These funds were augmented by various other efforts during the six years of the war. Parcels were packed and mailed regularly, and cigarette allotments were sent to the boys posted overseas. Every boy who enlisted was given a knitted sweaters, scarf and several pairs of socks. In addition to this, each woman of the committee wrote regularly to several of the boys, so each recruit from the district was assured of at least one regular source of news from home in addition to mail from his family. The League gratefully received the full co-operation and support of the whole community.

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### **The Stockholm Agricultural Society**

A North-west Territories Ordinance of 1886 provided for the establishment of agricultural societies, and grants thereto, with the object of encouraging improvements in agriculture. The Little Cut Arm and Qu'Appelle Agricultural Society, members of which were drawn from the Ohlen and Esterhazy districts, was formed in 1895. Its major activity appears to have been the holding of an annual exhibition. The printed prize list for the exhibition held in the Esterhaz School House on September 27, 1899 included awards for livestock, field crops, vegetables, household products and handicrafts. Among the articles for which prizes were awarded were the best hand-made plow share, horse shoe, panel door, field roller, wheelbarrow, and sleigh.

The officers elected in 1899 were Wm. Morrison, president, A. Stenberg, 1st vice-president, C. K. Hendrickson, 2nd vice-president, and Wm. Cosgrave, secretary-treasurer. Succeeding Mr. Morrison as president of this Society were Anthony Knourek (1900), N. Johanson (1901), and C. O. Hofstrand (1902). In its early years the Society appears to have had less than one hundred members. In 1899 there were 56 paid members whose postal addresses included Ohlen, Sumner, Kaposvar, Esterhaz, Whitewood, Valleyview, Hazel-cliff, and Round Lake (Rev. H. McKay).

Because of the growth of the village of Stockholm, the Society was renamed the Stockholm Agricultural Society in 1903. Mr. C. O. Hofstrand was its first president while Mr. Wm. Cosgrave continued as secretary until 1907. The Society was not able to hold its exhibition each year but in some instances both a summer fair and fall seed show were held. It was intended that these be alternated between Stockholm and Esterhazy. From time to time meetings were held to hear speakers and discuss agricultural problems. Sometimes the speakers came from Regina. At a meeting held on August 27, 1904 the following local speakers led the discussion: Mr. C. O. Hofstrand on sugar beet raising, Mr. A. Stenberg on wheat, and Mr. C. K. Hendrickson on poultry.



Following a submission of the members, the Minister of Agriculture approved the change of the Society's name to the Fertile Belt Agricultural Society, April 2, 1914. In this way the Society became co-terminous in boundaries with the rural municipality whose name it now adopted.

—Compiled by A. R. Turner from records  
in the Saskatchewan Archives.

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Stockholm's First Store — Interior



Stockholm's First Store — Exterior

## VII.

# Government by the Rural Municipality of Fertile Belt

CANADA became a Dominion in 1867, and the rapid progress of the development of Western Canada is unparalleled in history, for it evolved from an absence of systematic control to complete self government in a period of 36 years. The Canadian Government gained control over all the land known as the North West Territories through successful negotiations with the Hudson's Bay Co., through the British Government, and with the Indians, by a series of treaties. Due to the combined influence of the Hudson's Bay factors, the missionaries and the Mounties, a fairly high degree of order and peace had already been established, so that the settlers lived in safety among the natives.

Since 1883 there has always existed a committee on Municipal affairs. Theirs was the responsibility of bestowing or refusing municipal incorporation. Communities with insufficient population to become towns had no organized local body to handle their public affairs until 1887 when The Statute Labour Ordinance enabled local residents to pool their resources for work on roads and bridges. The following year this was replaced by The Statute Labour and Fire Ordinance, when fire protection was added to the other improvements. In 1896 this legislation was again known as The Statute Labour Ordinance and was followed in 1898 by a Local Improvement Ordinance, when units of townships were established, and Local Improvement Districts were provided with a manual of information. Section 12 of the Statute Labour Ordinance provided that a meeting for the election of an overseer be held on the 15th day of March each year. The overseer received \$2.00 per day for inspection and was obliged to present an audited report annually. A chairman and secretary were elected for each meeting, although later the overseer sometimes acted as chairman or appointed one. The auditor was elected by closed ballot each year, and locally he was paid from \$3.00 to \$5.00 for his services.

The first and only Statute Labour and Fire District to be organized here was No. 104 in 1897. The meetings were held in the home of A. P. Sjostrom. Alex Stenberg was the first overseer, serving from

1897 to 1903. Axel Olson was chairman in 1898, 1899 and 1902 and overseer in 1903. The first secretary and auditor was V. Anderson, who also acted as secretary in 1898 and 1899. These meetings were well attended and business of importance to the community was discussed freely. When language difficulties arose, interpreters were made available and there were meetings when as many as three interpreters, Swedish, Hungarian and Bohemian, were present so that all settlers shared equal opportunities to express their views on local government. Other names appearing in the records were: Hendrickson, as secretary in 1900 and 1901, and William Cosgrave, as chairman in 1901 and secretary in 1902.

Taxes were levied at the rate of \$2.00 or two days labour per quarter section. Most taxpayers availed themselves of the chance to work off their taxes and in the first year only \$25.00 was collected, yet there was a small balance of \$3.50 on hand. The first major undertaking was the ploughing of a fireguard 16 feet wide by 14 miles long, and 103 days were spent doing it. The first government grant was allowed in 1898 when the ridiculously small sum of \$28.00 was forthcoming. Thereafter a small grant of from \$50.00 to \$55.00 was received annually by Local Improvement District No. 104, except in 1900 when no grant was allowed, despite the request for from \$100.00 to \$300.00.

Local Improvement Districts No. 105 and No. 103 were organized in 1898, and No. 99 in 1899. Steve Barath was the first overseer of Local Improvement District No. 105, while in No. 103 J. P. Nordin was the first overseer, followed by A. Pederson. It is interesting to note that this district was a little more generous than No. 104, for in 1900 it is recorded that a rental fee of \$2.00 was paid to Mrs. Hoglund, in whose home the meeting was held. Similarly, in 1901 and 1902, \$2.00 was paid to Mrs. Nordin. The first recorded wage for services as secretary, the sum of \$1.50, was paid to Hendrickson in 1902. In 1903 he seems to have rated a 50c raise, as his fee was increased to \$2.00, while Westins also received the \$2.00 rental fee, whereas in No. 104 no rent was paid to Sjostroms for the 1897 meeting. In 1898 this parsimonious district parted with 50c for a rental fee which was increased to \$1.00 per meeting for the ensuing five years. Records reveal that in 1902 the meeting of No. 3 was chaired by J. Marceille, and in 1903 by Nils Johanson. The minute book of Local Improvement District No. 99 shows that C. Leftwich was the first overseer, followed by A. Ford.

All districts used much the same type of equipment and had much the same work problems: a fireguard to plough each year, roads to grade, bridges to build and sloughs to fill. In 1901 there seems to have been a mass attack by the gopher population, as all available records of Local Improvement Districts here show money voted for

the purchase of both traps and poison. As early as 1901, the services of a government surveyor were available and a road grading machine was apparently in operation, as Local Improvement District No. 103 mentions a request for the use of it, though no mention is made of the request being granted. The first culvert mentioned was set in 1903.

While district No. 104 stuck to the system of work for taxes, in 1902 districts No. 103 and No. 105 voted in favor of paying taxes and having labour performed by contract, a trend that was being encouraged by the government through published circulars. From the following one can gain a clear picture of machinery costs. When the Local Improvement Districts were dissolved, District No. 104 listed its assets as follows:

two scrapers No. 1 valued at .....	\$20.00
two scrapers No. 2 valued at .....	\$24.00
one brush plough with shares .....	\$30.00
one four horse double tree with	
one large and two small clevises .....	\$ 1.00
	<hr/>
	\$75.00

A new bill in 1903 dissolved all Township Local Improvement Districts as they then existed, and abolished the provision of statute labour. Districts with an average area of four townships were established, with each township division electing a councillor annually and the four councillors constituting a council for the whole district. The new system came under more direct control of the Department of Municipal Affairs.

Locally, the first meeting of what became Local Improvement District No. 10A2, whose area was five townships, was held in the Central Hotel in Esterhazy, on March 16, 1904. Five additional meetings were held that year. The first Councillors appear to have been the overseers from Districts No. 99, 103, 104, 105 and from No. 124, of which we have no records. Under section 46 of the new ordinance, Councillors were to receive \$2.00 per day and 10c per mile for attending meetings.

The tax rate here was 1-9/16 cents per acre, or \$2.50 per quarter section. By count, there were 72 quarters listed and assessed. Money standing to the credit of the previous districts was placed at the disposal of the new district No. 10A2. John Donahoe attended this meeting by request, and became the first secretary-treasurer at a salary of \$55.00 per annum, subject to increase. Axel Olson became the chairman for the year. Others present were Ford, Teulon, Green, and Pederson. The local Member of Parliament, Archie Gillis, attended the first council meeting of each year to discuss the grant

to be solicited, and was present at other meetings when needed, to explain and establish the new system of municipal government.

The second meeting, held April 7th, was called by Gillis to consider the advisability of annexing Township 19A and that portion of Township 18 between Ranges 1 and 2 north of the Qu'Appelle River. That matter attended to, J. Kruppa joined the council. The annexation of this area, which we still retain, makes our rural municipality one of the largest in area in the province. The third meeting was also called by A. Gillis. He advised the district to increase the taxes to \$5.00 per quarter, as other districts had apparently already done this and so become more self supporting. He also stated that government grants would be chiefly for bridges, and advised making provision for payment to councillors for additional work. The secretary's salary was increased to \$80.00. Each councillor was to appoint a foreman within his district, and wage rates were set as follows: foreman \$2.25, man \$1.75, man with team \$3.50, all per nine hour day. The government grant in 1904 was \$196.00.

Councillors served for one term and for the 1905 elections the following were appointed returning officers: Division No. 1, George Weightson; No. 2, Charles Leftowich; No. 3, John Donahoe; No. 4, Charles Kenyon; No. 5, Mike Balog; No. 6, Axel von Holstein Rathlou.

In 1905 the secretary received \$80.00 per annum and was required to be bonded for \$500.00. In 1906 the meetings were chaired by Teulon, and Axel Olson became secretary at an annual salary of \$75.00, which was later increased to \$100.00. The assessment was raised, but only to 2¼ cents per acre or \$3.60 per quarter. The first discount was allowed for early payment, 10% if paid by July 1st. The council must have been desperate for cash. This appears to be the only figure in the records that has decreased while all others have increased both substantially and relentlessly over the years. In the same year, complaints were registered over the system of allotting the government grant, which apparently was controlled by an inspecting engineer who was accused of failing to work in close conjunction with the councillors. John Donahoe suggested holding fewer meetings. This trend to thriftiness resulted in four meetings being held in 1907, but was somewhat ignored in 1908 when five meetings were held, and completely disregarded in 1909 when they again met for six sessions.

Axel Olson was still secretary in 1907, engaged for a salary of \$90.00 which was increased to \$125.00, and A. G. Sahlmark was chairman. There were mutterings to the effect that government should remunerate the secretary-treasurer for additional work incurred through the imposition of an unwelcome supplementary revenue tax. The services of an engineer were requested to survey

the road through the valley from Stockholm to Whitewood. Coyotes, an ever-present menace, had increased to the point where the council organized the settlement into a wolf bounty district. The fourth meeting was held in Stockholm and it was decided to secure the services of a secretary by tender.

The tender of A. Olson was accepted, while John Donahoe was the chairman for the 1908 meetings. Councillors were still being elected from their divisions by the open vote system. Information was sought concerning the boundaries of this municipal unit. A resolution expressing disapproval of the Supplementary Revenue Tax was forwarded to Regina. Local Improvement District 10A2 voted to join the Local Improvement District Association which had been formed in 1906. Two delegates, J. Donahoe and A. Olson, were allowed \$30.00 expense money to go to Regina to attend the Association Convention.

W. T. Teulon chaired the 1909 meetings, and A. Olson continued as secretary. Fred Willey, Charles Kenyon and N. Zakrison were appointed weed inspectors. Gophers and wolves were still on the rampage, but though councillors were empowered to buy gopher poison, the wolf bounty was disallowed after July 1st, as stock was being poisoned. A new Rural Municipal Act had been passed, and a special meeting was held to discuss it. The secretary was voted a \$20.00 bonus at the end of the year to close out the books and to continue in office until sometime in January.

In compliance with the new Municipal Act, the first meeting of Local Improvement District No. 183 was held in the Esterhazy Hotel, on January 4, 1910, with Axel Olson in the chair and Williams serving as secretary pro tem. The new ordinance still allowed the councillors \$2.00 per day, plus 10c per mile to be paid at the end of each meeting. The first secretary-treasurer was A. Wallace Shaw of Bangor, engaged for a salary of \$300.00 per annum. Monthly meetings were held, alternating between the Shaw residence in Bangor and the Stockholm Hotel. Rent was allowed at a rate of \$2.00 per meeting during the summer and \$3.00 during the winter. Taxes were raised to \$4.00 per quarter section, and two weed inspectors were appointed, to act one day in the spring and one day in the fall, at a wage of \$4.00 per day. W. C. Wilds and A. G. Olson were the first weed inspectors. Councillor Knapp of Division 4 was replaced by Jim Nixon, who became chairman after August 6th. Membership was renewed in the Local Improvement District Association and Dave Laing attended the convention as the local delegate.

In 1911 a request was forwarded to Regina for a speaker to shed some light on the new Rural Municipal Act. The most important change was one concerning the procedure for electing councillors. The secretary-treasurer was to act as Returning Officer, District Re-

turning Officers were to be appointed, and a nomination meeting was to be held, while voting was to be done by closed ballot. David Laing acted as chairman that year, and Shaw continued as secretary, for \$400.00 and expenses. Taxes were increased to \$5.00 per quarter, and wages were increased so that the overseer received \$3.00 per day, a man \$2.50, and a man and team \$5.00. Complaints were coming in regarding poor railroad crossings and poor cattle guards at the crossings, and it was decided to restrain domestic animals from running at large. A Number Ten Carey Safe was purchased for \$185.00, less 6% for cash, and also less \$10.00 deducted for breach of contract for delay in delivering the safe. These appear to have been a pretty sharp group of councillors who didn't miss any opportunities to cut expenses.

The first nomination meeting was held Dec. 4, 1911 and the first council to be elected by closed ballot were John Brunyansky, John A. Persson, Axel Olson, James Nixon, William Russell and Joseph Piggott, elected in 1912. The tender of Shaw for secretary-treasurer, or \$400.00 plus 2½% on all collections of school taxes, was accepted.

The first large budget was presented in 1912:

Division 1	\$400.00	Division 4	\$1200.00
2	\$900.00	5	\$1100.00
3	\$550.00	6	\$ 800.00

The first seed grain was advanced under the authority of the municipalities Seed Grain Act. Dr. Christie became the first Medical Health Officer, being retained for a fee of \$50.00 per annum. Dubuc applied for, but was refused, an agricultural society grant, probably because they were outside our Local Improvement District. Where road divergence occurred, land titles were acquired by Council where previously rent had been paid to the land owner. A very explicitly worded herd law was enacted and poundkeepers appointed were, William Mappin for Stockholm, A. Reilly for Atwater, and J. R. Thompson for Esterhazy. Each was allowed 10c per mile. The road foremen were: Division 1, Louis Nagy, Esterhazy; Division 2, Z. E. Lindwall, Stockholm; Division 3, George Sherlaw, Stockholm. The idea of instituting municipal hail insurance was discussed and considered desirable, so a bylaw was submitted to the electors, but defeated by a 123 to 65 vote.

The development of Municipal Government had advanced rapidly, and 1913 saw the last major change in our locality, when the secretary received a letter from the Department of Municipal Affairs announcing the erection within the district of a rural municipality, necessitating the election of a reeve. D. R. Williams was elected January 24, 1912. Seven names, Fertile Belt, Cut Arm, Little Cut

Arm, Devon Park, Esterhazy, Saint Joseph, and Stockholm, were submitted to the Department of Municipal Affairs. As a result, Local Improvement District No. 183 became known by its present name, the Rural Municipality of Fertile Belt No. 183. There were also changes in the fees. The Reeve received \$4.00 per meeting and councillors \$3.00, plus 10c per mile. The secretary's salary was increased to \$700.00, and applications were called for. From the five received, the council voted in favor of A. W. Shaw. Vernon Flook, who lost to Shaw by one vote, was appointed auditor at a fee of \$6.00 per working day. Road appropriations were doubled in four divisions, the Reeve and Deputy Reeve were named tax assessors, and the first tax notices were issued. Friday June 13, 1913, might well be considered an unlucky day for the local taxpayers, as taxes were increased from 3-1/8c to 5 1/4c per acre, or from \$5.00 to \$8.40 per quarter section. The following year the secretary-treasurer's salary was increased to \$1000.00 per annum and he was required to be bonded for \$3000.00. D. Lamont and William Laing came before the council to request an Agricultural Society grant; a wolf bounty was again authorized, and the municipal school tax was put on a monthly payment basis.

In 1914, it was decided that the council should meet regularly at Stockholm on the first Monday of every month at 1:00 P.M., unless otherwise decided at a council meeting. This custom has been adhered to fairly consistently up to the present, although the day has been changed to Saturday. Another precedent was set when it was decided, on March 7, 1914, to publish the minutes of the meetings in the Esterhazy Observer. In aid of agricultural societies, the following bylaw was passed: "...that in the event of an Agricultural Society being formed, consisting of not less than fifty members in each district tributary to Bangor, Atwater, Stockholm, and Esterhazy villages, the municipality will give a grant of \$200.00 toward the funds of the society". Boundaries of the school districts came under the jurisdiction of the municipalities, and at one time or another almost every rural school in the municipality requested changes, some of which were allowed and others disallowed. Instructions were received that hamlet lots must be assessed for \$100.00. The use of pay sheets replaced road orders for day labour; a work day was eight hours long, and pay for a man was \$2.00, man and team \$4.00 and foreman \$3.00. The proposed tax rate was 2 1/2 mills. \$150.00 was voted in aid of the Belgian Relief Fund and \$150.00 grant was made to the Fertile Belt Agricultural Society, plus \$1.00 for every membership of \$1.00 to a maximum of \$250.00.

The following surprising item appeared in the 1915 minutes... "...that owing to the fact that this municipality is spending large sums of money in order to raise the standard of intelligence in stock



breeding and that the improvement in horses bred in this municipality is very marked, therefore be it resolved that this council takes no action that will in any way interfere with individual efforts in breeding". Carried 6 to 1 votes. Lands were assessed at a flat rate of \$15.00 per acre and taxes at 3½ mills. A water finder purchased from Mansfield and Company, Liverpool, proved to be too difficult to operate so a new automatic water finder was purchased. A fee of a dollar plus expenses, which was later changed to \$5.00, was charged for this service. It was suggested that the fee for polling booths for the 1916 election be paid to the Red Cross. Another grant of \$150.00 was made to the Agricultural Society. Gopher tails became standard contents of the pockets of small boys throughout the district when a bounty was offered for these unseated appendages in 1916.

During the years of the first World War the government requested donations from all rural municipalities of a Provincial Patriotic Fund. This request must have evoked little response, as in 1916 a direct tax of one mill was imposed. The local tax rate became 4½ mills, but property of soldiers on active service was exempt from taxation. A request for the fees from licences of motor vehicles was made, since the council felt that such fees should be used for local improvement. The Provincial Patriotic Tax was increased in 1917 to 1½ mills. Several grants were made this year, including \$100.00 to the Red Cross, and the regular Agricultural Society grant, while a \$10.00 grant was made available to any educational society for school fairs. \$50.00 grants were made to branches of the "Returned Soldiers Welcome and Aid League" at Bangor and Esterhazy, with similar grants available to Stockholm and Atwater. Trouble was being experienced with gopher destruction because of unoccupied Canadian Pacific Railway lands, and in 1918 a charge of 2c per acre was levied. That year grants of \$250.00 each were voted in aid of the Red Cross and the Y.M.C.A., as well as \$100.00 to the local Agricultural Society, and when funds for Agricultural Relief for the Allies were being solicited the council generously earmarked \$250.00 for this purpose, although they considered the request premature.

More changes were put into effect in 1919. First the bonding company required that the municipal books be audited by a firm of chartered accountants. Then, the Royal Bank had opened a branch here, so the account was transferred to it and important papers and records not in daily use were stored in the bank's vault. The council called for tenders for a secretary-treasurer at a salary of \$1200.00 per annum, and the tender of Holger Munch was accepted. Council meetings have been held exclusively in Stockholm since that time, usually on the second Saturday of the month.

The conduct of affairs of the municipality consistently drew

favourable reports from the municipal inspectors. The Department of Public Health gave early attention to the cure and control of tuberculosis in the province, and cases from this district were treated at the nearest sanatorium, at Qu'Appelle. When the opportunity of joining a Sanatorium Pool came in 1924, the local council voted in favour of it, to be financed by the payment of an annual levy. The Reeve and Secretary formed a committee to deal with applicants for admission under the Pool agreement, and all applicants passed by the committee received free treatment. The R. M. of Fertile Belt continued to pay the Sanatorium Pool levy until 1930, when a Provincial Anti-T.B. levy was imposed on municipalities, entitling all resident T.B. patients to receive free treatment.

The depression years, commencing in 1929, were trying ones for all people in the province, and there were years when some farmers didn't even realize enough to pay for the cost of seeding and harvesting. That this district was a mixed farming area, made existence possible, but the inability of farmers to pay taxes meant that the municipality was unable to carry the relief burden and finance its own affairs. Government relief was urgently needed and sought. Regularly each year the council sent a delegation to Regina, to personally seek the best possible arrangements for the badly needed assistance.

Relief came first in the nature of roadwork on a 50/50 basis with the municipality, which in turn paid the farmer one-quarter cash and applied three-quarters against taxes. Carloads of seed, feed, and fodder came into the district. The seed relief was a loan secured by notes, as was the aid which came later, to buy petroleum products and twine. The Red Cross distributed clothing. There was a wave of pioneer co-operative spirit pervading the province, and the Saskatchewan Voluntary Relief Commission, under the direction of Dr. Hedley, was formed to distribute cars of fruit and vegetables that travelled freight free from the "haves" to the "have-nots". In 1937 such cars arrived in this municipality and in 1938, when this district had a crop of vegetables, a car was loaded out from Stockholm.

The drought and rust conditions continued through eleven years and, coupled with low market prices and low wages, the situation worsened and aid grew to include direct relief. Orders for this relief were issued to the needy, to be drawn on local merchants. Maternity relief grants, which had always been made available by the council, were issued in greater numbers. As if the depression were not enough to have to cope with, two epidemics, one of grasshoppers and the other of equine encephalitis, occurred to further hex the farmer and vex the councillors. These visitations were taken in their stride by all concerned and mechanically, as if immune to further suffering, the farmers accepted from the council, poison, to kill

the first, and serum that was to cure or prevent the second.

The councillors held many extra meetings discussing requests for, and issuing, relief orders. They accepted voluntary reductions in remuneration, and the mileage allowance was decreased from 10c to 5c, while the secretary took two voluntary cuts of 10% in salary. Wages for work hit an all time low in 1933, when a labourer received 20c per hour, a foreman 30c, a man with two horse team 35c, and a man with four horse team 55c. That the government had made a realistic effort to cope with deplorable conditions, and that the people acknowledged and appreciated their efforts, was voted in the following motion which was carried unanimously by a full council.. "that this council wishes to express to the Provincial Government appreciation of the manner in which relief has been distributed within this municipality and the efforts made in general to meet the relief problem, also the excellent assistance and co-operation received from Mr. Boucher and Mr. Tait, your representatives".

Sometime during these years, in an effort to help solve the water shortage problem, the Provincial Government conceived the idea of making grants available to assist farmers to obtain dugouts which conserved the spring run-off of water. To insure that they were strategically located, the site had to be inspected and passed by the government. The municipality received 4½c per yard from the Department, and farmers here were charged \$25.00 until 1943, when the cost was increased to \$50.00. To implement this service, municipalities had to purchase power outfits. These were to be had only at considerable expense, and when T. S. Brunskill started advocating such an investment, he was faced with strong opposition. Undaunted, he persevered until he had won over a majority of the council and an outfit was purchased in 1940. It proved its efficiency and was a boon to the district, solving the water shortage problem for all time. Little did the council think then that they would be ditching in 1956 to alleviate flood conditions. Steve Seman, a master mechanic and their first operator, severed connections with the council in 1947, concluding seven very profitable years for the municipality. Realizing that power machinery could be used for building roads faster and more economically, in addition to excavation work, the council purchased another larger outfit in 1948.

About this time the local seat of administration conformed to new government legislation requiring contributions to a superannuation fund for Municipal Secretary-treasurers. During the Second World War, the council generously supported the war effort through purchases of certificates and Victory Loan bonds. A plan was instituted in August of 1942 to encourage savings among children, whereby the council provided the last stamp in a savings book, limited to one

book per child. A Prairie and Forest Fire Act was passed, and in accordance with it each year ten fire-guardians have been appointed within the municipality. A government representative addressed the council in 1943 and helped to organize a "Win the War" committee. This committee discussed military postponement cases, and made recommendations to the Farm Labour Requirements office.

The Provincial Government passed the Hospitalization Act in 1946, and the council appointed the Municipal Secretary, then Holger Munch, Registrar and Collector of Hospitalization Tax. Holger reached the age of retirement in 1946 but the council, unable and unwilling to replace him, applied for and received an extension of service for five years. Frank Dlouhy became assistant secretary in January 1952. The following November Holger was given leave of absence till his retirement at the close of the year. Frank became Secretary and Mrs. Irene Meston was engaged as Assistant Secretary. The Municipality continued to rent the office for a time, while discussions proceeded concerning acquiring a permanent office. Eventually, following a plebescite, the building they were renting was obtained from Holger Munch for \$4750.00. At the 1953 Annual Meeting of the Ratepayers a presentation was made to Holger Munch. Several speakers representing the community expressed appreciation for the services he had so faithfully rendered the district during thirty-two years in office. Frank Dlouhy resigned in January, 1956, and was replaced by Ewald M. Kitsch.

The system of a community planning scheme for building roads was advanced by the Provincial Government and adopted by the local council in 1954. Commencing in 1943, and for several years thereafter, complaints were received concerning the poor supervision of the regulation of the flow of water governed by the chain of dams in the Qu'Appelle Valley. Considerable resultant damage was reported. During two successive years, 1954 and 1955, the district suffered extensive flood damage. Some farm land and sections of market roads were under water, bridges were washed out, and at Round Lake several summer homes were completely destroyed and all the rest suffered damage from combined wind and flood conditions. Of the two summer resorts in operation, one received severe damage and the other was practically wiped out. The council appealed to the P.F.A.A. for assistance and an inspector arrived to assess the extent of damage to the farm lands and the roads. The Municipality received a relief award of \$15,000.

Through the years donations were generously contributed to a variety of causes, among which were: War Relief Fund, Mobile Kitchen Unit, Hudson's Bay Road, Kamsack Relief Fund, Manitoba Flood Relief, Canadian Arthritic and Rheumatism Society, and Handicapped Civilians Society; and regular contributions have gone

out to The Salvation Army, Canadian Red Cross, Canadian National Institute for the Blind, and The Cancer Commission. In addition to these, a grant of \$500.00 was voted toward the construction of a hospital in Esterhazy in 1939, and an additional \$500.00 grant was allowed in 1947 to purchase special hospital equipment.

Since the position of councillor is supposed to be one that confers honor in lieu of salary, we take this opportunity to honor those who served for the longest terms: T. W. Morris, who represented Div. VI for fifteen consecutive years, and Thomas S. Brunskill, who represented Div. III for two years and Div. VI for thirteen years, tied at fifteen years each for the longest service as councillors. John Pangracs of Div. I served that division through ten years, George Skokan similarly served Div. II for ten years, Carl Bergstrom, J. E. Nixon and W. Bradshaw represented divisions III, IV, and V respectively for a period of fourteen years each, Wm. Romanchuk also served in two divisions for a total of twelve years, representing Div. V for four years and Div. II for eight years. John Chelle, currently elected as Reeve and now in his fifteenth year of intermittent service, has held that position longer than any other Reeve.

The men who served on our council contended with the ravages of predatory animals, insects, disease and weed infestation. All problems were faced and dealt with systematically and scientifically. No municipality has taken more advantage of the opportunities that were made available by the government for sponsoring better farming methods, stock improvement, land conservation or health services. The number of miles of, and the condition of, market roads in this municipality compares favourably with that of any other in the province. The operation of Municipal Government has grown to the proportions of big business in Saskatchewan. Locally, we have a permanent staff of two, up-to-date equipment was installed recently, and now the furnishings are being renovated, all of which adds up to better and more expeditious service to the district. We have come a long way since 1902 when the first paid secretary officiated at a single meeting in the year at a salary of \$1.50.



## VIII.

# THE EXCEL DISTRICT

**A**T the turn of the century, with the better organized immigration policy, there was a rapid opening up of new country. The district north of what was to be Stockholm was surveyed in 1902 and the first homesteaders arrived on the heels of the surveyers. This was a more cosmopolitan group, comprised of Hungarians, a Swedish group from the U.S.A., and British settlers from England and Ontario.

One million emigrants are said to have migrated from the U.S. to Canada between 1897 and 1914. A number of these came to our district. A family by the name of Erikson came from Sweden to Thief River Falls, Minn. in 1869. Their son, Gust, and his neighbors, Algot and Frans Edwin Rydberg, and Anders Johnson were well established farmers. They owned their land, had accumulated herds of stock and some machinery, and had comfortably furnished homes. In their local newspapers, they saw advertisements of land being opened for homesteads near the Swedish colony of Nya Stockholm in Assiniboia.

Algot and Gust came to Canada in the spring of 1902 to look the land over. The fact that they filed on a quarter section each, before returning home, is evidence that they liked what they saw. After listening to their glowing accounts of the new land Edwin, Anders and his three sons, Ferdinand, Martin and Alfred came to Canada for the July 1st celebrations. They filed on four more quarters and returned home in time to celebrate the fourth of July.

Gust Erikson was making preparations to move to Canada. He sold his farm, loaded freight cars with such settlers' effects as machinery, stock and household equipment, and they entered Canada as immigrants in August of 1902. A hired hand, Carl Wold, and Algot Rydberg came with Gust.

When Eriksons arrived at their homestead site, being first on the scene they had no neighbors with whom to stay, so they slept under the stars. Overturned wagon boxes provided their only shelter from the weather. They hauled lumber from Whitewood and quickly put up a two-storey dwelling. The house was not completely finished until 1904, but as soon as it was in a condition to shut out the weather they were happy to move into new sleeping quarters. The

men then went about the business of working the land and putting up hay. Like the good neighbor that he was, Gust Erikson put up hay not only for his own needs but for the Rydbergs and Johnsons who had to remain in the United States to harvest their crops.

Simultaneously these others were preparing to leave for Canada, and September saw them on their way. Moving was a major operation. Everything had to be hauled by horses twelve miles into Thief River Falls and many trips were made before the cars were loaded. The journey was a memorable one for Mrs. C. Lindoff, a daughter of Franz Rydberg, who still has a vivid recollection of it. The party was composed of Mr. and Mrs. F. E. Rydberg and six children, Mr. and Mrs. A. Johnson and eight of their eleven children; one son and two married daughters remained behind. F. E. Rydberg and Alfred Johnson went with the freight to tend the stock and poultry, and the rest of the group spent one night in Thief River Falls before taking the passenger train. The following night was spent in Crookston, Minnesota. The next stop was Winnipeg, where they stayed two days at the "emigration hall" waiting for the freight to catch up with them. After an exchange of news concerning their different travelling experiences they left for Whitewood, where they stayed, again awaiting the freight. As they unloaded their cars, such household effects as they needed immediately and the chickens were loaded onto the wagons and the remainder stored. Anders and his two older sons rode out with the cattle, while the others climbed aboard the wagons, and all cheerfully started the thirty-five mile journey northward.

A few hours were spent on the bank of the Qu'Appelle River, where they picnicked, rested the stock, and gave all a chance to stretch out after riding in the cramped quarters of the wagons. By late afternoon they were on their way, and about 9:00 P.M. they stopped at a farm house to ask for lodging. Here they were treated to the usual pioneer hospitality. All were invited in and the housewife commenced to prepare food at once. The smaller children lay down on a hastily improvised bed on the floor and fell fast asleep. The others had a welcome meal and later a place was made for them to sleep also. After thanking their new friends, they were away again in the morning. They found Algot building his house, and he accompanied them to their homestead. Their first few days were spent with the Gust Eriksons whose home was large but, with twenty-two persons all told, was fairly bursting at the seams.

Many trips had to be made to Whitewood to pick up the lumber and stove pipes which they purchased, and the machinery and other items which they had stored. As soon as Algot's house was closed in and a stove installed, the Rydbergs moved there and so relieved the congestion at Eriksons.

Rydbergs and Johnsons had arrived on October 2nd and since it was late in the year they erected their buildings with haste, the women and older children helping. Rydbergs built a one room house, 18'x22' with a flat roof. Over it they put tarpaper and covered it with earth. A hole was dug in the hillside nearby and poles and hay were added to make a chicken house. Poles were used also for the skeleton of another building and with a liberal use of hay a barn was improvised.

While the older members of the family were thus employed, the younger children did what they could. For them too, homesteading was a great adventure. They herded cattle and gathered wood into piles which were later hauled home by the men. They enjoyed playing on the hilly country side, sometimes visiting the surveyers who were located on the same section, and who kindly added a thrill by demonstrating the use of their instruments to the eager children. Everything was new and exciting and they relished every minute of every day. To add to the excitement, Algot was sub agent for a land company so Rydbergs had many callers looking for a place to settle.

The first year, a trip to Whitewood, the nearest town, took two long days of travel in each direction. Trails were not too well defined in the new settlement and sloughs and hills in profusion added to the confusion of the traveller. To guide the family safely home, a beacon was devised. A high pole was set up in the farm yard and a lighted lantern was hung from the top on nights when anyone was absent.

Rydbergs and Johnsons were in their new homes by winter. In the spring their first crop was seeded. For the Rydbergs this was one acre each of oats, barley and wheat, and the oats were never threshed. September 2, 1903 was an unhappy day for the homesteaders when a record fifteen to sixteen inches, on the level, of snow fell.

Alfred, another brother of the Rybergs from St. Vincent, Minnesota, entered Canada the same year accompanied by his father-in-law, Joe Brousseau, and their families. After their homesteads were proved up, Algot and Alfred moved to Stockholm where they had the International Machine agency. Joe Brousseau sold his farm in 1909 and moved to the Melville district.

Karl Frederick Sundberg was employed in a lumberyard in Soderhanim, Sweden, a city of 12,000 population. In his spare time, cabinet making had become a paying hobby. Musical instruments were his specialty and he turned out many beautiful violins, guitars and zithers. Stories of 160 acres of land for \$10.00 made a strong impression on a city dweller, and the Sundbergs packed their personal belongings and came to Canada. They brought an 1895 model



treadle sewing machine, a zither, copper kitchen ware and a large supply of clothing that was to last them several years on the prairie. Harold Sundberg, then fourteen, remembers the trip with pleasure. They crossed on a Cunard liner, the *Aurania*, which had been used to transport cavalry troops and their mounts to South Africa during the Boer War. The cabins the Sundbergs occupied were reasonably comfortable. It was Harold's assignment to carry the zither. To be entrusted with such a heavy responsibility filled the boy with an exhilarating feeling of importance and when he had conducted it safely to Winnipeg he experienced the satisfaction of having completed his mission successfully. Homesteads in this area had been picked up so quickly that none were left by the time the Sundbergs landed in Winnipeg, so Karl obtained work on a building construction gang. By a strange coincidence he met a carpenter who was giving up his homestead north of Stockholm. Karl appealed to the Swedish emigration agent and was advised to file on the homestead. In October they moved to their new land. Transportation had consumed their savings, so they had no cash with which to buy lumber and since it was too late to build a log shelter for winter, they gladly accepted the invitation to spend the winter with Gust Eriksons.

The Sundbergs were a welcome addition to the community. Karl constructed most of their home furniture. He supplemented his farm income in the first years by doing carpentry work in the village and district. Mrs. Sundberg performed the services of a midwife and was ever ready to answer a call on a moment's notice. On one occasion in the midst of making a batch of bread she received an unexpected call and resourcefully bundled up the dough and took it along to the home of the waiting mother whom she attended while the bread baked. She was also an expert tailoress and plied her trade to the advantage of her children, her neighbors and her grandchildren.

Gust Erikson was, for those times, a well equipped farmer. He had brought with him good machinery, eight milk cows, a horse and the first pair of mules to come into the district and he purchased four oxen. Being progressive he was soon established in contract breaking. Though only fifteen Harold Sundberg got a job driving four oxen on one outfit. C. J. Meyer drove the other outfit; a horse and two mules. He had homesteaded near Dubuc, then moved to the Excel district and bought Anders Johnson's farm in 1908. Mrs. Meyer died in 1916, but Carl and his son Einar are still on the same farm.

Harold worked on the railroad for a year, then in 1906, went to the U.S.A. where he joined the Marines, serving with them from 1907 to 1911. He returned to the farm in 1913 and when his father died two years later he and his brother, Sigurd, rented the farm till

Sigurd left the district. Harold married Anna Johnson, out from Sweden five years previously. They bought Hans Johnson's homestead where Harold built a comfortable home in which they still reside with their older son Fred. Harold served on the Excel school board for many years. He was secretary treasurer for 21 years and has been on the executive of the rural telephone company since 1920.

Gust sold his farm to Joe Ratti and went back to the U.S.A. in 1919. The Johnsons also left, Andrew to Alberta, the others back to the U.S.A.

Mrs. Karl Sundberg bought a house and moved to Stockholm with



Mrs. K. F. Sundberg  
93rd Birthday

her three younger children in 1923, selling the homestead to Harold. The youngest son, Bernard, has been grain buyer with the Pioneer Elevator Co. since 1933. He has served efficiently as the secretary treasurer of the village since 1942. Mrs. Sundberg Sr. is the oldest living woman of the Stockholm and district pioneers. Now affectionately known as Grandma Sundberg she makes her home in Calgary with her daughter and son-in-law Bertha and Jim Macinnall. Still busy with her knitting and letter writing and an avid reader at 91, she is keenly interested

in current events and is eagerly awaiting the publication of this history.

There was a good community spirit among this group of settlers and a school was soon built. Social activities in the early days centered around the school, mostly picnics and concerts; they were attended by the whole family. A branch of the Good Templar Lodge was formed. This order originated in Sweden, was later organized in the U.S.A., and from there was organized in various Swedish settlements in Canada. Church services were also conducted in the school house. Mr. C. O. Hofstrand, from south of town, was the first visiting pastor. He conducted services once a month. Services were held by various other visiting clergymen until 1910.

The Reverend Carl Lindoff came from Chicago, where he had studied at North Park College. Graduating in 1908, he came to Canada. He served in his first parish in eastern Canada, then came

west to Dubuc in 1909. He married Hilda Rydberg December 10, 1909. A highly respected family in the community, neighbors regretted their departure for another field in 1913. Mr. Lindoff served in the ministry for 34 years. He retired in 1943 to live in Prince Albert where his widow and daughter Viola still reside. The youngest son Elmer enlisted in the Royal Canadian Artillery, Fifth Field Regiment in 1940. He went overseas with his unit in 1942 and was killed in action October 26, 1944. He lies buried in the Canadian cemetery in Bergen Op Zoom, Holland.

G. L. Wahlberg, another settler to arrive from the U.S.A., proved up his homestead one mile north of the Excel district and went back to the U.S.A., returning with a bride. He sold his homestead and bought a half section from John Bunyak one half mile south of town which he farmed for the next six years. This he sold to Victor Schaufert and bought land in the Qu'Appelle Valley by Round Lake. There he built a beautiful home and one of the largest barns in Saskatchewan. Water was piped from one of the many springs in the hills into both the house and the barn. One of our more successful farmers, financially, the Wahlbergs retired some years ago to British Columbia where Mrs. Wahlberg died. Gus spends his winters near their children and returns each summer to camp in his cabin on the shore of Round Lake.

A number of other Scandinavians settled in this district but remained only a short time. Among them were Ole and John Nelson, Hans Staff and Paul Paulson, who returned to the U.S.A. and the H. Anderbergs who went on to Alberta. From Nya Stockholm settlement, sons of some of the early pioneers were old enough to take homesteads when the district north of town was surveyed. Among these were three sons of Charles Sahlmark, Arthur, Rudolph, and Philip, and John Persson.

Blacksmithing for the gang on the C.P.R. construction was done from a box car. A Norwegian by the name of Skagen, formerly a deep sea fisherman, was in charge of the car. Philip Sahlmark worked for a time at blacksmithing with Skagen then he proved up his homestead north of Stockholm and went to the U.S.A. to work, returning in 1907. He married Elizabeth Grandstrom and bought C.P.R. land south of town where he and his only son Charles still live and farm.

Thomas Simpson Brunskill, a lad in his late teens, living on a farm in Westmoreland County England, was looking for adventure. He had just missed it in the form of enlistment for service in the Boer War because of his youth. Stories from far away Australia sounded intriguing, so Tom planned to go there. Before leaving home, he and a chum decided to go on a holiday to the Glasgow Exposition by bicycle. While there he became sold on the idea of com-

ing to Canada. A neighbor lad, Chris Ayrle, asked to accompany him. The two left Liverpool July 3, 1902 on the Tunisian. Aboard were 700 Canadian soldiers who had attended the coronation of Edward VII on their way home from the Boer War. After an interesting crossing they landed in Montreal July 12th.

One of his first impressions concerned the railway tracks. Accustomed to seeing heavy gauge rails in England it was almost a frightening experience to think of riding over our comparatively flimsy rails. However, they arrived safely in Winnipeg, stayed over a day and then went on to Moosomin to have a look at the Pipestone district. Not satisfied with it, they joined forces with two Scots, Walter Campbell and John Torrance, and hired the livery man, Dick Beaubier, to show them the countryside. As a result of this excursion, they decided to settle in the Excel district.

John Torrance, an ex naval engineer held India Scrip. Scrip is a document issued as evidence that the bearer is entitled to receive something free. The Government issued scrip to homesteaders in two forms. One was called "Boer War Scrip", which entitled the veterans of the Boer War to one free quarter section in addition to the regular homestead quarter, providing they were adjoining quarters. The other form, called "India Scrip", entitled the holder to two free quarters, with similar provisions, for service in India. Torrance had to go to Yorkton to complete arrangements for acquiring his three quarters.

The others returned to Moosomin, where Brunskill bought a team of horses from Joe Henderson, and a wagon, building tools and provisions from McNaughtons. Another contrast Tom noted was in the piece of machinery known as the walking plow. The English make that he was familiar with were two and three furrow versions, about ten feet long, with all steel frames, while the regulation Canadian walking plow was a one furrow effort with a wooden frame. A few two furrow walking gang plows were available, but not in common use, and Tom had to be satisfied with a one furrow plow.

When they arrived at their homesteads, Tom heard that a railway construction gang was located on section 31, three miles west and were obtaining their provisions from Broadview. He thought it would be a good idea to follow their trail and go to Broadview for his lumber. This required two trips for lumber for a 12'x14' shack and they were arduous ones. It had rained and there were many mudholes, and after getting stuck a few times he unloaded and reloaded the lumber at each hole. He built his shack, they put up 60 loads of hay and plowed a fireguard. Chris and Walter stayed with Tom till the following year when they built their homes while Tom broke 20 acres. When fall came, they went to Moosomin to work with threshing gangs; Tom hauled water. Then, Joe Henderson

asked him to look after his farm as the Hendersons planned to spend the winter in Ontario. When the Hendersons returned in the spring it was to make arrangements to move to Ontario. Tom bought their farm, machinery, three horses and two cows for \$1800.00 cash and decided to drop the homestead. In April he was all through seeding and with nothing to do thought it might be profitable business to prove up on the homestead and sell it, so he went back for the summer.

In the early days there was much fun derived at the expense and discomfort of the so called "green Englishman". In the fall of 1903 Tom cut the crop on his farm at Moosomin slightly on the green side and stacked it, a trick he had learned in England. He noticed many farmers stop by his stack, look it over, and drive off chuckling but couldn't guess the reason for their mirth. Tom's crop was last on the run to be threshed. When the day came, many of these neighbors expecting to see the stack rotting in the center were on hand for the threshing. This green Englishman had the last laugh when, to the amazement and chagrin of these smug farmers, his wheat turned out to be the best sample of wheat on the run. That winter an English couple lived on his farm so he returned again to the homestead.

In 1904 Alex Patterson from Paisley, Bruce County, Ontario was visiting in the Grayson district. Hearing of a homestead that was being dropped in the Excel district Alex filed on it. He stayed with E. F. Rydbergs while Karl Sundberg relined the shack that was already there and put a substantial new roof on it. The fall of 1905 he put up a stack of hay and went back to Ontario for the family.

Walter Campbell died while threshing near Fleming and his brother Joe took over the homestead. Joe Harrison, son of a neighbor from Westmoreland came in the fall of 1905 to look for land. He stayed a year with Tom. During this time they had an amusing time with a newly bought pony. The morning after the arrival of the pony they decided to make a trip to Round Lake. The trip was without incident until they arrived at the valley. There was a steep old trail down a ridge of hills just north of the Mission. They proposed to enter the valley via this trail. Jogging along in the sun Joe, sitting with his arms folded, had dozed off to sleep. The pony, not satisfied with this quick entry, turned sharply off the ridge and headed straight down the ravine. The angle was so steep, the turn so abrupt, and Joe so unprepared that he rolled out of the buggy and down the ravine, like a wheel until he was stopped by a bush. Tom managed to stay with the buggy and the surefooted pony till they completed what is no doubt a record for the shortest route into the Qu'Appelle Valley ever taken, right side up by man and vehicle.

Joe decided that he preferred the Moosomin district so he bought

Tom's farm. Tom lined his homestead shack and built a log barn sheathed with lumber.

In the early spring of 1906 a spark from a C.P.R. engine ignited John Shiva's pasture on the north side of the track west of the village and burned right through to Waldron. Farmers worked hard fighting the fire to save feed and buildings. In March of that year the Pattersons arrived with a carload of settlers' effects and settled on their homestead. They had three sons and five daughters.

The next year Tom finished seeding in May but by November had only cut and stacked eight acres. Others even worse off had none cut when, on November 11th, two feet of snow fell. Tom who had a good yield from the eight acres had plenty of seed and what he had to spare he sold for 50c a bushel. To help the farmers without seed the government shipped in seed which was handled by Mathew Kenny in Stockholm. It was loaded with stinkweed and mustard seed and cost the farmers \$1.25 per bushel.

Tom's sister and niece, Julia, arrived from England in the fall of 1906 to keep house for him. On November there was a double wedding in the community when Julia became Mrs. Moody Patterson, and Jennie Alice Patterson became Mrs. Tom Brunskill.

Chris Ayrle traded his homestead to Pattersons for property in Paisley and left for Ontario in 1908.

Brunskills bought three more quarters and farmed till 1942 when they retired to Stockholm. The land was rented until 1948 when Tom Jr. married Della Dixon and moved into a new home on the farm. Mrs. Brunskill passed away in 1952 but Tom still resides in the village. He served the community on both the municipal and village councils and at present is secretary of the Stockholm and District Board of Trade.

The Alex Pattersons died on the farm. One son, Moody sold his land in 1929 and moved to Stockholm, another son, Richard, married Cora Merrin of Dubuc and continued to farm until 1943 when he sold out to John Banga and moved to Vancouver. Other members of the family left the district in their youth.

Proving that this is a small world two unusual incidents were experienced by men of this district. Tom Brunskill had a team tethered out in chains in 1903. They were frightened, broke their chains and took off. Thinking that they may have gone back to Moosomin Tom caught a ride to Whitewood where he heard that a strange team dragging a piece of chain had arrived at Simpsons in Wapella. He took the train to Wapella and sure enough it was his team. In the course of a conversation with Simpson he learned that he was born across the valley from the Brunskill home in Westmoreland and furthermore that they were cousins. The other incident is even stranger. J. W. Meyer came from Sweden in 1901 and took

up a homestead in the Excel district the following year. About the same time Carl J. Meyer homesteaded in the Dubuc district actually only two miles west of J. W. Neither knew that the other was coming here till they met at Gust Eriksons. They were Brothers! J. W. has retired and lives with his sister Mrs. Albert Palpitsky in Yorkton. The Palpitskys bought land in 1925 and farmed a number of years in the district raising purebred chickens and doing a tremendous egg business. Their chicken house was the only adobe building in the community. They retired to Yorkton in 1952 where Albert died four years later.

John Croswell was a stone mason and plasterer. The employment situation in his home town of Ahmic Harbour, Ontario gave little promise for a financially successful future for the twelve children of this family. The limitless opportunities, accessible in the west to all who were willing to work for them, were being talked about all over Ontario.

As part of a colonization scheme the railway companies were offering excursions to homeseekers in the west. The Croswell's eldest son, Henry, took advantage of the excursion in July of 1901, to judge for himself how much truth was back of these stories. Satisfied with prospects, he returned after harvest to advise his father to come west. John came west to Rocanville in the spring. He placed an application with the land agent of the Sumner district, William Cosgrave, applying for a quarter for himself and one for each of his two older sons, Henry and Edward. All were in the district just east of Excel, which later became the Wales School District. By July of 1903 father, mother and eight of the children were settled temporarily in a shack on the Cosgrave farm. The shack had a sod roof and in it they shared an experience of many homesteaders. When the weather was hot and dry the house was cool and comfortable, but in rainy weather the only advantage between the inside and the outside was on the outside, where the rain was at least clean.

Because it was closer to their homesteads the Croswells moved to a shack on the farm of Fred Green for the winter. From him John bought logs and built on their own farm in the spring. They had brought their household equipment with them from Ontario. A sewing machine seems to have been standard equipment for almost every settler. It was such an essential item, that once acquired, housewives never parted with them no matter how far they moved. Among their effects the Croswells had one, and an organ, a piece of furniture that was not so common at first but was so highly prized that after a while few homes were without one. Much of the early day relaxation and entertainment in the home centred around the family organ.

To increase their seeded acreage more rapidly, in 1904 they hired Jim Reynolds to break twenty acres. He did custom breaking with oxen for \$1.50 per day. Then as now this district was best suited to mixed farming and John Croswell was astute enough to recognize this fact and immediately set about raising a herd of cattle. There was plenty of open land for free pasture during the milder weather and hay for winter feeding was to be had for the cutting. Like most of the early settlers Croswells had bought their farming equipment; a cow, a team of broncs, a set of harness and a plow, on time. Cattle sales eventually freed them of debt. During this time the father and older sons all took advantage of any available work pooling their earnings, to supply the necessities of life for the family.

Gradually hard work and good management paid off for the Croswells as it did for others. A second and more substantial house, so well constructed that it is still habitable, was built in 1907. Logs for this house came from the Qu'Appelle Valley where they grow tall and straight. A large barn was built in 1916.

John sold the farm in 1920 to his son Henry and moved to Yarbo where he bought land and erected new buildings. He lived a long and active life still able to read without benefit of glasses when he was ninety. He died at the age of 95 years. Mrs. Croswell passed away at 84 years in 1938. Henry sold his farm which had grown to a section of land and he and Mrs. Croswell retired to Esterhazy.

Earl is the only son of John still farming in the district. He and Mrs. Croswell have been active in community affairs. She has been secretary of the Wales school for 13 years while Earl has served both on the school board and on the executive of the local Credit Union. Lottie, a daughter of John Croswell, is married to Glenn King and they live on a farm east of the village. Lyle, the youngest son has the Yarbo farm and the other members of the family left the district some years ago for Alberta.

Others who farmed land adjacent to the Excel District were the Bateman brothers, who moved to Stockholm, and James Reynolds, who came to the district in 1904. Jim worked first as a labourer then bought a half section which he worked for some years and then sold to Frank Shivak. This hardy Irishman stooked eighty acres in the fall of his 80th year. Still a bachelor, he makes his home with Roy Sjodins south of the village.





## IX.

# THE VILLAGE OF STOCKHOLM

THE word success has many interpretations. If you were to measure it by one's claim to fame and fortune, the history of Stockholm and district is not a success story. We do not present it as such. We do hope that it will be regarded as a record of historical value. Multiplied a hundredfold this is a picture of early times in the beginning of western history.

Just as the individuals of most districts of our province are a composite of people of all social, economic and moral levels, so too, are we. There have been rumors abroad that all the fires which occurred in our district didn't just happen. There have even been whispers that some of the elixir that travelled by fast motor express to quench the thirst of our neighbors "South of the Border", dripped its way through copper piping well hidden in our fair district.

Though these rumors are not completely without foundation, we are not writing for a tabloid and so we will not record the unpleasantly sensational. But, since we are writing history, we do admit that ours is an average community.

Not all early villages expanded to the breadth of large towns; ours didn't. We have no industries, none of our people is recognized by the world as famous, and no banks will ever bulge with our life's savings. Our children are only ordinary too, but like all parents we feel inclined to exaggerate their efforts. A number of them have had the opportunity of higher education. Others lacked education but had talent coupled with ambition. Consequently, some of our sons and daughters, who have left the district, have made worthwhile contributions to larger centres in a variety of fields; more of them later.

In 1902 the area that is now Stockholm was bare prairie. The first settlers approached the district to the south in 1885, and gradually they spread north. These settlers had been promised that a railroad would be built in the 1880's. Rumors were current that the line was to follow the valley and swing north at the ravine which is now our Round Lake Road. This route was abandoned, probably because the ravine at this point was too deep, and the C.P.R. line which branched off at Kirkella was surveyed to come north where the valley was shallow, crossing the Qu'Appelle river at Tantallon.

Grading was finished in 1902 and the village site was surveyed in 1903, with the rails being laid as far as Neudorf that fall. The first Canadian Pacific Railway service was a mixed train that went to Neudorf one day and back the next. It had one passenger coach to accommodate incoming settlers.

As the railroad wormed its way across the prairies a fairly uniform pattern of villages materialized. First years saw section houses, general, grocery and hardware stores, boarding houses, livery barns, lumber yards, flour and feed establishments, post-offices, machine agencies, blacksmith shops and elevators, the common denominator of all prairie towns. Rapidly following these came dwellings, hotels, churches, schools, stations, halls, and other places of amusement

The first man to build on a lot in the new townsite was an old hand at pioneering. Dougald Lamont, one of a family of six boys and four girls, was raised on a farm near Chesley, Ontario. Dougald, who had foresight, plenty of ability, and unbounded energy was hard working and hard living. The Lamonts were a hardy Scots family. Doug enjoyed a keen mind until he died at the age of 88 and Joe passed away in 1957 at the age of 95 in Whitewood. In 1882 Doug and Joe homesteaded at Minnedosa, Manitoba. When their shack caught fire and burned, they lost interest in homesteading. For a time Joe took a job as cook with a construction gang before going back to his trade of tinsmithing. He plied his trade with firms in Winnipeg and Brandon before opening his own hardware and tinsmithing business in Whitewood. Business boomed and he wrote home to Bill Lamont who came out, did Joe's bookkeeping, and sold machinery. 1884 found Doug and another brother, Robert, freighting between Calgary and Edmonton, and draying in Calgary. Joe told us that Doug installed Calgary's first two hot-air furnaces in 1886. Selling his partnership interest to Bob, Doug went off on a fruitless venture to the Yukon, with a group of Calgary men during the 1897 gold rush. In the Boer War years, 1899-1902, he was a cavalryman, seeing service with the Lord Strathcona Horse. After the war the call of the west brought him to Whitewood, to Joe and Bill.

Anticipating the arrival of the railway, Doug hauled lumber from Whitewood in the spring of 1903 and built himself a tiny 8x10 shack. The eldest of the Lamont boys, George, who was visiting in Whitewood, spent a few weeks helping Doug to get settled. Their first meals were cooked over three stones. These were soon replaced by a cook stove which sat outside the door for want of room inside. Here they lived while they built a hardware store 16x24 with a second floor, where Doug and his clerk could batch. They hauled all the lumber for this building from Whitewood too, and when it



**Mrs. Sara Erikson, Vivian and Victor in front of Stockholm's first residence**

was completed, stocked it with goods hauled from the same town. He was the only man already established and doing business, on what later became the east corner of Railway Avenue and Ohlen Street, when the railway came through.

By rail, the Colonial Elevator Co. shipped in lumber to build an elevator and to stock a lumber yard, which also handled coal. The Berg Bros. from the colony unloaded the lumber; at two dollars a day they earned \$14.00. Meals for the building crew were prepared in a tent by Mrs. Berg. The elevator company found that too much of the lumber was leaving the yard without benefit of billing, and finding no profit in that kind of business, they soon discontinued the yard and sold the coal shed to Doug Lamont. Wm. Sheppard, an American was their grainbuyer and he arrived in time to handle the 1903 crop.

The main street of the village was named Ohlen Street to honor the Swedish emigration agent who had done so much to help the New Stockholm colony through their first and most difficult years. The first street west was named Forslund Street to honor the C.P.R. land agent. On a lot on Forslund street occurred three first events. Here the first dwelling house, a comfortable cottage, was erected for Wm. Sheppard. Here the first "Blessed Event" took place when a son was born to Mrs. Sheppard. Here too, the first death was to happen. Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Laing, homesteaders from four miles S.W. of the village drove to town by team and sleigh January 21, 1905. While in town Mrs. Laing became suddenly ill and was taken

to the Sheppard home. A livery was dispatched to Whitewood for a doctor but, unhappily, that night she died before the doctor arrived.

Jake Homelson who had worked as a carpenter and as machine salesman for W. A. Lamont in Whitewood also came across the valley in 1903. He was a tall lean man, whose handlebar mustache gave him the appearance of being a fugitive from a barber shop quartette. He had the Massey Harris agency and built a tool shed which he occupied that fall, while he readied his warehouse with office. The following spring he built a house for himself on the west side of Ohlen street and brought his family from Whitewood. While finishing the warehouse they were heating tar to join the roofing seams. The tar ignited and burned the shed and scorched the warehouse before it burnt out. The rolling clouds of dark smoke were seen by farmers five miles south of town. So happened the first village fire.

The fifth building completed that year was a general store opened by H. C. Young, who came west from Ontario with a small amount of capital. It required little capital in those days to erect a serviceable building. At this time it was not unusual to find the appointment of postmaster assigned to a merchant who handled the mail from a section partitioned off from his shop. H. C. Young was Stockholm's first postmaster. Personality plus and a rare gift for music could be the "Open Sesame" to any door in the early days. When George Savage drifted into the village, liberally endowed with both, he was destined to enjoy several years of popularity and welcome, sometimes at the expense of various households throughout the district. England was his homeland and he was a gentleman in every sense of the word. His first encounter with work was as clerk for H. C. Young during the winter of 1903-04. Then too, he took up a homestead.

Bill Lamont came across the valley in 1904 and, on the N. W. corner of Railway Avenue and Forslund Street, he built a general store which he opened with a big dance. He later acquired the McCormick machinery agency. He is well remembered as a shrewd business man and as the husband of a very beautiful and charming wife, and the father of four beautiful daughters. They also had two sons, one of whom was later drowned while they were in Saskatoon. They took an active part in both political and social affairs of the village, until two years after Bill sold his business to Hogarth & Clandinnen, when they left for Saskatoon, later settling in California.

Between a few brushes with proving up his homestead, George Savage also clerked efficiently for W. A. Lamont, and did odd jobs of work. One such effort was the building of a barn on the Potyok

farm on the northern limits of the village. It stood until a few years ago, and though it did little to enhance the scenery it was a vast improvement over the four poles with cross bar and a wisp of straw that passed for a barn on his own farm. The homestead inspector must have been susceptible to the power of music too.

Miss Christina Persson from Wetaskiwin, Alberta, came to visit her brother John Persson in 1903. Recognizing the need there would be for a boarding house, they planned to open one together. Christina went back to Alberta to wind up her affairs there and John hired as carpenters Norman and Bergstrom from the colony. When Christina returned in the spring the building was ready, a well was dug, and they were soon open for business on Railway Avenue, west of Lamont's hardware. The C.P.R. roadbed was only lightly gravelled in those days and the weeds that flourished along the way had to be cut down by hand. Large extra gangs were employed through the summer to do this work. The section house was large enough to provide sleeping quarters but, to these men who were all bachelors, as were the foreman, Reade, and the second man, Walter Gordon, the new boarding house was a boon.

It is a characteristic of the Scandinavian that he is ever mindful of the welfare of his stock. Later that year John Persson had a barn built that could house his cow, with space to rent for five teams, in readiness for winter. His second son, Gus, came in from the farm to erect the building back of the boarding house, and another son Godfrey moved to town and obtained work with the C.P.R. Church services were conducted in the boarding house dining room until fall, when the Presbyterian church was dedicated. The first Minister in charge was the Reverend N. E. Bompas. Almost all the village folk, and others who had moved into the district north of town, attended this church.

There was an extensive migration from Ontario to the plains with the coming of the railway. A man called Harry Croswell was working in the bush in Ontario as assistant to the blacksmith. They both decided to join the exodus; Harry was to come ahead to find a location. He arrived in Stockholm the summer of 1904 and built a blacksmith shop on Railway Avenue, west of Homelson's. When his partner failed to follow, Croswell decided to stay on and operate the business himself.

Alex and Swea Stenberg, who had been operating a small grocery business on their farm for a number of years, decided that they could better serve their customers by moving their stock to the village. 1904 saw this move. Still living on the farm, they sold groceries from a small shop that later was used as a warehouse for the 24x40 two-storey building that was finished in 1905, on Railway Avenue east of Homelson's. In April 1905 the family moved in to



Temperance Hotel

occupy the second storey. They built up their original grocery business to a large general store trade, which they continued to operate until 1917. Alex also obtained a contract with the Dominion Express Co. and acted as their agent until a station agent was appointed by the C.P.R.

Sven Svedberg, another farmer from the New Stockholm colony, commenced building what was intended to be a Temperance Hotel on the Northeast corner of Railway Avenue at Forslund Street, with a livery barn behind it on Forslund Street. The barn had an office and room for seven teams. That fall it was rented to Knute Hendrickson. Karl Sundberg from the Excel district built a small shanty style dwelling house for Knute and his family on Angus Street, one block east of Ohlen.

In 1905 the village was a beehive of activity. The hotel was ready early that year and was operated as a boarding house for a short time by two men from Whitewood, McRae and Tom Lumsden. The first floor contained a sample room, lobby, dining room and kitchen. There were twelve rooms on the second floor of which some, only six feet wide, could just barely accommodate a bed and washstand.

The threads of the lives of certain men are interwoven with the pattern of the story of every village and such were Douglas S. Macdonald and William S. Persson, of the oldest firm still in business in Stockholm. Douglas arrived in Canada in 1904, from Glasgow, Scotland. The son of a Scottish solicitor, he was trained as an office clerk. A spirit of adventure and thoughts of a homestead brought

him to the prairies. On his arrival in Winnipeg, the immigration officials sent him to Moosomin, where the local agent sent him to a farm on a Saturday. Sunday he inquired of the farmer what his work and wages would be, whereupon he was informed that the day being Sunday the matter would be held over till Monday for discussion. Being a good Presbyterian, Douglas accepted the decision with grace. Later that same day he was requested to assist when a neighbor's cow was brought to the farm to be serviced. Feeling this episode to be at variance with the farmer's earlier expression of religious scruples, Douglas left Monday morning with the mail courier. His next stop was at the farm of a Mr. Macdonald, five miles out. Here, though the farmer did not require a hired man, Douglas enjoyed a pleasant ten day stay before moving on to Red Jacket. From there he walked to Wapella and in half an hour was hired by another Mr. Macdonald at the rate of one hundred dollars per year. One day a few months later a gentleman by the name of Dougald Lamont drove out to the farm with Hugh Cameron of Whitewood. Doug, in need of a good bookkeeper and clerk, had heard of one Douglas Macdonald being employed as a farm hand at Wapella and, being a man of action, straightway sought him out and offered him \$25.00 per month and board and room. Douglas agreed to come to Stockholm when his year expired.

His year terminated, he arranged to have Hugh Cameron drive him to Stockholm. During a two day interval spent at Camerons, he shot three ducks one morning and cooked them for dinner. Cameron and his hired man arrived home hungry and were happily surprised to detect the appetizing aroma of roast duck. The hired man extolled the beautiful plumpness of the birds. Cameron, suspicious, investigated. Alas for Douglas, his culinary achievements didn't match his bookkeeping standards! The ducks had been cooked with contents intact. While crossing Scissors Creek ravine he saw his first beaver.

The day he arrived in Stockholm happened to be the wedding day of the Excel school teacher, a Miss Walker, to H. C. Young. This called for a celebration and the groom rose to the occasion by contributing \$5.00 to purchase the where-with-all for the boys to celebrate. Either \$5.00 bought a great deal more spirits, or the alcoholic content was considerably higher than present standards, or both, as every man in the village, be he resident, or in on business, was intoxicated with the exception of John Persson and his son Godfrey. Dougald and Douglas batched in rooms over the hardware shop till December, 1905, when Dougald married Ingeborg, the only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Persson. The Lamonts went east for a three month honeymoon, leaving Douglas to run the store.

We mentioned that construction costs were low. Most pioneers

put up their own buildings but the cost for construction, labour and lumber included, for a 24x30 two-storey building was around \$1000. Almost all Scandinavians appear to be blessed with the ability to wield a hammer and saw with dexterity and precision, so there was no shortage of carpenters in this community. Speed and economy being prime considerations, stores became box-like structures, often with living quarters upstairs. Home and business under one roof cut expenses, and the merchant was convenient to his work. There was no forty hour week and no minimum wage. Service to customers was dispensed, with or without smile, at whatever hour they happened along, and clerks were hired for whatever wage could be agreed upon. Goods were often displayed outside the shop. Such hardware as harness, forks and shovels, was draped all over the front wall of a shop and rolls of barbed wire, kegs, pails, and other items could be seen piled on the platform outside the building. At night most, but not all, of the displayed goods was locked inside the store and, strangely enough, little was stolen. The first storekeepers built plank sidewalks in front of their own buildings. Some had iron rings attached to the walk at intervals; others had tying posts driven into the ground with iron piping running through them. Whatever the system, the customer was assured of a place to tie his team that was even more convenient to his shopping centre than are the much advertised parking lots of the modern city supermarkets of our day. Local merchants obtained their stock from Winnipeg or Brandon wholesale houses. Some of the first firms dealt with were: Stobarts, J. W. Peck and Son, Robinson Little, and Gaults, for dry goods; Porters for crockery; Codvilles (Brandon), Jobin Marin, and the Swedish Importing Co. for groceries; for hardware, James Robertson, Ashdowns, Marshall-Wells and Great West Saddlery; and Sherwin-Williams for paint. Most of these are still pretty familiar names. Harness came in parts and had to be assembled by the merchant. Travellers called regularly, and there are stories that buying was a three day performance. The first day would be spent getting one another in the supposedly right mood, which simply meant getting inebriated. The second, so the story goes, was spent recovering, and the third day the business was transacted. Although such bouts did take place, they were the exception and not the rule. We are told that the great majority of the early day travellers were a fine group of men. Salesmen for grocery firms called monthly, and for hardware at intervals of four to six weeks, selling mostly from catalogues, or at most having but one trunk of samples. They transacted their business in a leisurely fashion and travelled between towns by the local livery, which was an essential service in every district. Drygoods salesmen called at from two to three month intervals and, until the 1920's, had with



them as many as ten trunks, containing as much as \$10,000 worth of samples. This necessitated travel by train and displaying their wares in hotel sample rooms, and a stop over of a few days in each town to transact their business.

The first plan of the townsite of Stockholm was issued by the Canadian Pacific Railway Land Department on March 5, 1904. Acting on behalf of the local residents, W. A. Lamont forwarded this plan to the Department of Municipal Affairs on April 25, 1905 with a request that the area be erected as a village. On June 30, 1905 that area which is the western half of section 25, township 19, range 3, west of the second meridian was established as the Village of Stockholm by an Order in Council. At this period in history the only elected officer was the Overseer. Ratepayers' meetings were held frequently, perhaps four times a year, when everyone had a chance to express his views. A chairman and a secretary were elected for each meeting. Motions were passed by a majority vote and the



Section Crew—1906—Sam Stevenson, foreman, Mike Potyok, Walter Gordon, Godfrey Persson

overseer was left with the responsibility of seeing that the work was carried out. Herbert Clifton Young became Stockholm's first Overseer by defeating Doug Lamont in the election held July 10, 1905. W. A. Lamont was the Returning Officer. On August 16th, at the first meeting after the election, two pieces of business were transacted. It was decided first, to adopt the regular assessment system, and second, to plough a ten furrow fire guard. One more meeting was held in September, when \$15.00 was voted as payment to the Overseer, \$10.00 was tabled for the ten furrows which apparently, were still to be ploughed, and \$50.00 was voted to cover the cost of digging and cribbing a well.

John Dekinder bought the Persson boarding house in the spring of 1905 and added four bedrooms, a lobby and bar. The Colonial Elevator Company sold out to International and Joe Meston was the new agent. William Sheppard left Stockholm to take up a homestead and Perssons moved into the Sheppard house for a few months while Messrs. Zakrison and G. L. Wahlberg built a new dwelling house for them on the east side of Ohlen Street. Christina moved to Seattle. Sam Stevenson, a new section foreman, was sent in from Manitoba. The first Roman Catholic church was built that year.

Harry Crosswell constructed a two storey building between his blacksmith shop and the hotel. The upper floor of this building was utilized as the first hall. With transportation being limited and slow, people didn't care to travel far afield for their fun and the local hall was a welcome addition to the village. Godfrey Persson bought the livery barn from Svedberg late that summer and Hendrickson went farming. Bill, the youngest of the family, then twelve, helped his father run the barn through the fall while Godfrey went threshing. As an engineer on a gang he earned enough to buy a team of drivers. These and a team brought in from the Persson farm he used to operate a livery service. Rates then were \$2.00 to Dubuc, \$2.25 to Esterhazy, and other trips in proportion. The livery service was used chiefly by travellers, collectors for machine agencies, and for trips to and by the doctor.

A horseshoer from Liverpool, England arrived in 1905, and settled on the west side of Ohlen just north of Homelsons' residence. He was a quiet man and gentle with animals, which may have been the secret of his success in handling them. No horse was ever taken to Fred Gent that he couldn't shoe.

The most sought after horses in the early days on the prairie had some broncho in their pedigree. They were hardy and strong, though difficult to handle. They were a challenge to the patience and alacrity of every owner and horseshoing could be a dangerous trade. Godfrey remembers in particular an eccentric livery team

that he owned. Nellie was a headstrong mare with an aversion to being tied. Loose she would stand quietly in the barn by her mate, Bill, but if tied would break the halter shank. After two broken halter shanks Nellie won the argument and thereafter was walked into the barn and left to stand beside Bill. Bill's eccentricities were of a more dangerous sort. He disliked drunks, people who spoke loudly, and the sound of the Hungarian language. Anyone who fitted these categories soon learned that his two hind feet packed a terrific wallop. One day Godfrey's eldest brother John came into the barn, feeling no pain, and in this happy condition forgot Bill's idiosyncrasy. He remembered seconds later when he was picking himself out of the opposite stall. After warning Fred of Bill's weakness Godfrey, with a feeling of guilt, left his animal there to get shod for the first time. Even Bill was no match for the horseshoer from Liverpool. To quote Fred, "He was no trouble at all".

One day Bill Bateman and Jim Reynolds, farmers from north of the village, rushed into D. Lamont's store and in a state of semi-incoherence demanded a quantity of rope and immediately dashed out with their purchase, followed by several villagers. Two young farmers Charlie and Joe Bodkin had been digging a well on Charlie's homestead two miles north of the village. At about the sixty foot level whilst Charles was digging he struck a gas pocket and was overcome by the fumes. Joe unable to do anything alone went to his neighbor Anders Johnson for help. Soon there were many helpers gathered around the top of the well. Among them was Thomas S. Brunskill. Although by this time a light held at the mouth of the well was immediately extinguished, Tom volunteered to descend to try to fasten the hastily procured rope to the body, so he was lowered into the well. In their excitement and haste they had let down too much rope and Tom was unable to locate the end. He called up to the waiting men to have some pulled back out but too much time had elapsed and he collapsed and was hauled up unconscious. Ice tongs and a mirror were then produced and using the mirror to deflect light down the well and the ice tongs as a grappling iron the body of Charlie Bodkin was raised to the surface. In the days of hand dug wells such tragedies were not uncommon. A well digging crew could consist of as few as two men. Equipment was primitive. When the well became too deep to throw the loosened earth out by shovel, a windlass was rigged up and the men alternated between digging and hauling out the earth. Gas pockets were a deadly menace that was frequently encountered. Over such wells men have seen sparrows light on the windlass and drop into the well, dead. When well boring machines, which were powered by a horse, were available the element of danger was lessened. No man need go down unless the bucket struck a stone, and a light could

first be lowered to ascertain the presence of gas. These machines cut a hole 18" to 24" in diameter. One of the first in this district to purchase a well boring machine was Mike Hoglund in 1908. His brother-in-law, Anton Berg operated it. Sometimes in their haste and contempt for danger that is ever present, men overlook safety measures. Thus, Anton Berg was overcome by gas while digging a well south of Dubuc and he expired before he was hauled to the surface. Machines for drilling wells were soon available but did not appear in this district till fairly recent years. They were more prevalent in districts where water could not be had at shallow levels.

The first fire equipment, a ladder and one dozen pails, was purchased for the village in 1905. The need for a cemetery moved the council to open negotiations with the Canadian Pacific Railway for a plot. A petition was also forwarded for a station agent and a stockyard.

That year too Sam Stevenson quit the C.P.R. and built and opened a furniture store on the north west corner of Railway Avenue and Ohlen Street, and Gus Persson bought out Homelson and moved the shop beside the residence on Ohlen Street. A little further north on the same side of the street John Bunyak built a blacksmith shop.

The first floor of the Crosswell's hall building was partitioned in half and Alfred Mason of Esterhazy opened a butcher shop and engaged a bachelor by the name of McDougall as butcher. On the other side of the partition Wolmer Moller and E. Schionneman opened a real estate office. We are told that for a time the C.P.R. kept a wire and telegraph key installed in this office to connect the village with the outside world but as far as anyone remembers neither the real estate agents nor anyone else in the village was qualified to operate it.

Sven Svedberg terminated his lease to Lumsden and MacRae and decided to operate his hotel himself. He added a notions and candy counter and furnished a poolroom. His reason for moving to town is adequately expressed in an article written by himself and published in the Grain Growers Guide: "I did like farming well enough, it was one thing I did not like, I was not a married man, and the thing (especially) I did not like, was cooking, baking and such, have not done that so far, and was not going to do it. The girls have been like other good things, thin sown for some years. The later years it was naturally more of they, but if I took a fancy to any one of they, they did not fancy back with any matrimony result. So, I did sell my farm and moved to Stockholm".

Steve Lisik, a farmer from Kaposvar district, came and built a store on the west side of Ohlen near Assiniboia Avenue, and a house across the street. When the store was completed he gave a free dance. Steve was generous and his cider flowed freely. The build-

ing was of logs with a flat roof and by dawn there were dancers on the roof.

Harry Crosswell was the newly elected overseer. Twenty dollars were spent for fire protection and twenty-five more went to pay for the first street improvements. Fred Titman from Esterhazy was hired as clerk by W. A. Lamont, with whom he stayed for three years building a home for himself on the west side of Forslund Street north of the lane.

Andrew Gustav Anderson, his wife and children came north from Marshall County, Minnesota, the fall of 1905 and spent the winter on the farm of Mrs. Anderson's brother, Ferdinand Johnson of the Excel district. Andrew Anderson was a man of many talents. By trade he was a steam engineer. Before coming to Canada he had farmed and, as a carpenter, had built seven churches, several dwelling houses and farm buildings of all kinds. He built a home for his family on the east side of Forslund Street and they moved into it early in the summer of 1906. Since steam engineering afforded only seasonal employment he did building between times. In his spare time he made attractive usable furniture and skis. He was adept at repair work of all kinds and was one of the few men in the district, Gus Persson being another, who could install the flues in a steam engine. This was no job for the timid. Since the work had to be done between closing down late at night and commencing threshing early in the morning, there wasn't much time to wait for the engine to cool off. The mechanic therefore had the added discomfort of intense heat during the beginning of the operation and, if it were late in the fall, he endured bitter cold before the task was completed. Having the faculty of being able to repair anything, brought him many strange assignments. One such incident happened late one night when some of the boys had been fooling around with the local constable's handcuffs. It was only after the handcuffs had been securely fastened around the wrists of a visiting traveller that he learned that the key had been lost. The traveller was no Houdini and, when all the efforts to free him failed, someone got A. G. Anderson out of bed. He checked the situation and solved the problem by making a key that served to free the unhappy victim.

The Andersons, happy in their new home, made steady progress for the next five years. Then, while working as an engineer at McAuley, Manitoba Andrew was tending both the engine and separator, and in oiling the running separator, the sleeve of his smock got caught and his right arm was crushed under a set screw. Afraid that the doctor would remove his arm he refused to take chloroform while the mangled member was treated. All that winter the arm had to be dressed. He retained the arm, though it was crippled and its use was very restricted. This was a great misfortune to a man

with a large family to support, who earned his living with his hands, but Andrew courageously trained his left hand and arm to use his carpenter tools. In the meantime, with no income and mounting doctor bills, Mrs. Anderson an expert sewer did dressmaking, and laundering too, to keep the family fed and clad. With all this work, Mrs. Anderson still found time for her church. She joined the Ladies' Aid the first year she was in town and has continued to be an active member ever since. During the first years, while the children were small, she took them along as did the other members Mdmes. A. Stenberg, A. von Holstein, E. Erikson, W. A. Lamont, and D. Lamont.

Later in the summer of 1906 Eric Erikson sold his farm and some sixty head of cattle, bought the Sheppard house and moved to Stockholm. Sometime during 1905 he had read with interest, of a Swedish colony being settled in Cuba. The following February he and Paul Stromgren travelled there. Eric was so favorably impressed with the country that his immediate reaction was to purchase a piece of land and then to hasten home to make plans to move to Cuba. The climate of that region was doubly appealing to him since he had contracted asthma. But with the family comfortably settled in Stockholm, Eric felt that it would be an act of selfishness to take his wife so far from all of her relatives so he considered plans for making a living locally. The Eriksons had retained two or three milk cows and the best of their horses from the farm. Horses were valuable animals in those days and Eric felt that there was money to be made raising them. He purchased a quarter section one mile west of town and pastured the animals there. He also acquired the John Deere and Moline machine agencies and in any spare time worked as a carpenter.

Hospitality was dispensed with the same liberal open hand by the Eriksons in their new home as it had been in the country. Just as on the farm when all who called, Indian or white alike, shared what was available, so it was too, in the village. Walter Ochapowace, better known as "Walter Chief", was one of many who knew that he could always depend on Mrs. Erikson's hospitality. On more than one occasion he exclaimed "Good tea! Good tea!" over a cup of her excellent Swedish brew of coffee, to the thinly veiled amusement of her daughters.

Almost at once Eric entered into the public life of the village, first as school trustee and later as councillor. He was soon recognized as a man who could be depended upon to carry out the duties of his office conscientiously. Mrs. Erikson was equally busy at her kitchen stove and sewing machine. Eleven children were born of this marriage, one more than to the Andersons who lived across the street. Like her neighbor, Mrs. Erikson too found time to work for her church. In addition to being President of the Ladies Aid for forty-

seven years, Mrs. Erikson taught Sunday School for thirty years. Family care and church work left no time for any social life in the early days, except such as was correlated with her church work.

A group of civic minded young men, Douglas Macdonald, Fred Titman, Godfrey Persson and Sam Stevenson formed a company to start a skating rink that fall. On the strength of this beginning Douglas sold twelve pairs of skates. After choosing a location on Ohlen Street near one of the village wells the committee built a fence around the area. Everyone was anticipating some good winter entertainment. At long last the day arrived when it was cold enough to commence flooding, and the well went dry! The only good strip of ice was from the well to the rink site. The well remained dry, and for some reason or other the wrath of the villagers over the loss of a well concentrated on Douglas. He began to think that a certain Mr. and Mrs. Macdonald in Glasgow, Scotland, must be longing for the sight of their son again, so he left for six months to gladden their hearts.

Dougald Lamont was elected overseer in 1907, and during his regime the village fairly hummed. The recently purchased pails and ladder were hung on easily accessible hooks on the outside of Stevenson's store. The first village by-law was passed, providing protection for the equipment and stipulating that a fine or five days hard labour on the village streets be imposed on any person who dared to tamper with this choice bit of village property. We were surprised to learn that a parking by-law was passed early in 1907. Whether it was pity for the poor beasts who were left to stand tied out for hours, or just a desire to keep the streets tidy isn't told in the records, but a by-law was passed restricting the parking time for horses on the streets to one hour. The tax rate was five mills. The first village constable, Godfrey, was appointed and a pair of handcuffs was purchased for \$5.00. The negotiations between the C.P.R. and the village for a cemetery plot were completed and E. Erikson, A. G. Anderson, D. Lamont and William Laing staked out the 400'x 300' lot on the northern extremity of the village. With a burst of optimism the village advertised for a bank, barber, blacksmith, butcher, doctor and druggist. The Deputy Commissioner of Public Works was in charge of roads and a long petition concerning roads to the village was forwarded to him. The first plank sidewalks were put down. We were also told that the building of these walks was financed through fines imposed upon those who overindulged in alcoholic beverages. This overseer was a busy man.

Douglas returned from Scotland in May. He and Sam batched over Sam's shop. While Douglas was unpacking Sam sought to entertain him with his violin. As a violin virtuoso Sam's efforts proved to be more enthusiastic than harmonious. In those days the

boys took their fun seriously and it is small wonder that in the midst of this private recital a shot rang out. Douglas doused the lights and they both rushed to the window. The night was pitch black and neither sound nor movement betrayed the whereabouts of the practical joker. The next morning the R.C.M.P. arrived to investigate. It was deduced that the gun had been fired from the direction of the loading platform and the spent bullet was located and dug from the wall. It may have been an accident but this mountie lost his bullet and so ended the investigation, but not Sam's struggle with the violin. It may also have been a coincidence but the next day the sailor Billy Bodkin, who had come west to his brother's funeral and remained to visit, left town for parts unknown.

In 1907 too the Perssons built an addition to the livery barn which could accommodate five more teams. There was a well in the new section and a loft with an oat chute. A hose from the well carried water to the main section. Doug Lamont had bought three lots on the east side of Ohlen Street, north of the lane and when he opened his lumber yard he had built the shed on the back of one of these lots. In 1907 he moved his hardware building onto the lot next the lane facing Ohlen Street. H. C. Young discontinued storekeeping in 1906 and sold his goods to Alex Stenberg and the building to Mathew Kenny, who became postmaster. The ambitious piece of advertising indulged in by the village council brought but one response, from a Dr. Middleton. The local citizens proved to be too healthy and he soon left for a more lucrative practice. The same Dr. Middleton later became the Deputy Minister of Public Health for Saskatchewan. When the Grand Trunk Railway went through in 1907, it passed just ten miles to the north of Stockholm. Local storekeepers soon felt the loss of trade to the new towns of Bangor and Atwater. Spring had arrived late that year and a killing frost came in September, ushering in one of the severest winters in the history of the province. Most of the grain was left uncut. What was garnered graded No. 1 and No. 2 feed and sold for 16c per bushel. We heard of one farmer who engaged a harvesting crew to do stack threshing. When the job was completed after marketing the whole crop, in addition, he was obliged to sell two steers to meet the threshing bill. Merchants had extended credit liberally and were having their problems to stay in business.

The village cemetery was fenced with cedar posts and two strands of plain and one of barbed wire. A new well was dug on the corner of Ohlen Street and Railway Avenue, which today is still the chief water supply for the village. Apparently the collection of fines was not keeping up with the need for sidewalks, and ratepayers who had been impatiently awaiting their construction were informed by the village council "...that they could build their own and await the



pleasure and convenience of the village council to pay for them”.

McDougall, who left town in 1908, was replaced in the butcher shop by Wm. Mappin. W. A. Lamont retained his machine agency, but sold his store business to Hogarth and Clandinnen, newly arrived from Elgin, Manitoba. These two gentlemen were gifted musically and Hogarth organized the first local brass band. This enterprise was conducted in a businesslike manner, with the members meeting at frequent regular intervals. Douglas Macdonald was their first secretary and the minutes were faithfully recorded for each meeting. Other members of this band were Fred Gent, W. A. Lamont, Gus and Godfrey Persson, Wm. Mappin, George Savage and the current section foreman, George Hudson. Identical bowler hats were their only concession to anything in the nature of a uniform. After practicing but three weeks, and being sublimely ignorant of such a thing as an inferiority complex, they accepted their first engagement: to play for the Esterhazy sports day. Their total repertoire consisted of the scales and two compositions, a waltz, “Della” and a march. The highlights of their career were engagements to play at the Brandon Fair in 1909 and 1910.

The first C.P.R. station was hauled on a flat car. It was a small building divided into two sections, an office and a waiting room. It was used by the section men to store freight until an agent was appointed in 1910.

To facilitate village government, the Saskatchewan Village Government Act was passed in November 1908 and village affairs came under the jurisdiction of the Department of Municipal Affairs. The act provided for the election by popular vote, of three councillors, who were to elect a chairman from amongst their number to be known as an Overseer. A secretary other than a councillor was to be appointed by the council. The area of a village was limited to 640 acres and the minimum population to fifty, which number was increased to one hundred by an amendment passed in 1912. Locally, the first full council was Thos.W. Hogarth overseer, Dougald Lamont and Gustaf Persson. Douglas Macdonald was the first secretary-treasurer, engaged for a salary of \$25.00 per annum. At this time many people had their own wells, so users of the town well were levied a special tax. A cemetery plan was drawn up on parchment and a block of lots reserved for charity cases. Choice lots were, and still are, sold for \$10.00 while other lots were \$5.00. Sidewalks of all plank and others edged with plank and filled with gravel were built. It seems the council had difficulty keeping the children of the village from digging in the gravel of these walks. The village had street lamps in those days too; oil lamps, hung from poles. Their care was the responsibility of the taxpayer near whose premises they were located and if a resident failed to keep his lamp lighted,

it was moved to a location where it would be tended.

The Inland Grain Company had built Stockholm's second elevator in 1906 and J. R. Carey was their agent. Early in 1909 this elevator burned to the ground. The Pioneer Grain Company built on this site the same year. Lennox had left Stockholm in 1906, selling his hotel and barn to Alexander, who had enlarged the barn. In the winter of 1909 there was another fire when the Alexander Hotel burned down. Probably more through pride in their marksmanship than through any desire to quench the flames a group of boys threw snowballs on the roof of the barn, which had caught fire from the hotel. We are told that they were stopped but the fire went out anyway. Officially all that was saved from the hotel was: one case of porter, one case of flasks and one box of cigars. Later that winter, however, various amounts of liquid assets kept coming to light in some local oat bins. The Alexanders sold their barn to Doug Lamont and left the community. This hotel was never rebuilt.

Albert Raff and his mother and stepfather and their children, Mae, Esther, Lily and Otto Kvinlaug arrived in 1909. They had come north from Wiley, Minnesota in 1904. They homesteaded near Shellbrook, then moved to Prince Albert from whence they came to Stockholm, to be near Mrs. Kvinlaug's parents the Alfred Johnsons of the Excel District. They rented living quarters in the village. Kvinlaug bought two threshing outfits and he and Albert proceeded to do custom threshing.

Farming had not been too rewarding, an overabundance of non-paying guests had left little to sell, educational facilities on the farm were poor and their friends of long standing, the Stenbergs, had already moved to town. All of these reasons influenced the von Holsteins when they purchased the Gus Persson house and moved to town with their children, Tulla, Huno, Otto, Margaret, Dagmar and Hetta. Axel Jr. known as Buster was born one month later and Tulla left for Vancouver where she subsequently married and still resides. The von Holsteins were able to put to use knowledge gained before coming to Canada. Mrs. Holstein, an accomplished pianist, patiently struggled with potential musicians through the next twenty years while her husband continued to serve the district as a veterinarian until his death in 1940. Large families, well cared for with no extra help, accounted for long hours of work from these early mothers. Svea Stenberg and Lisbeth Holstein also attended the Ladies' Aid meetings regularly. For Svea there were the intermittent duties of a midwife as well as the added effort of working in their store, when Alex was away hunting or busy with one of his public commitments. Both families found time, however, to continue the excursions to the lake which had been begun while they still lived on the farm. Summer was anticipated with longing

by the children of these two families and it was a happy group that loaded the wagons with provisions and, with the family cow tied behind, piled in and went singing on their way to Round Lake and a summer of swimming, fishing, and boating in a home made punt. About this time Stenbergs built a small kitchen and the two families camped together in tents. As time passed they built cottages and continued to camp each summer. This custom is still adhered to by the third generation in newer and more modern cottages on the original properties of their grandparents.

After selling his house to the von Holsteins, Gus Persson sold the Massey Harris agency to Valdemar Munch and moved back to the farm. A member of the Knights of Pythias from Brandon organized a local branch of the lodge in 1910 and W. A. Lamont was the first Chancellor Commander. The Pioneer Grain Company had installed Norman Nicholson as their first buyer. He remained but two years, long enough to court and win Sandra, second daughter of Alex Stenberg. They settled in the neighboring town of Dubuc. Jack Hunter replaced Nicholson in 1911. He also became agent for the Massey Harris agency which V. Munch gave up because of ill health.

After the crops froze in 1907 and burnt in 1908 Holger Munch said good-bye to his farm and with \$20.00 in his pocket moved to Esterhazy for the winter. Poker playing was one of the favorite pastimes of the male members of the population in those days. Evidently poker playing was more productive than farming as, come spring Holger had \$60.00 in his pocket, a new wardrobe and his winter's board paid. Through the next year he was agent for the Davidson Real Estate in Esterhazy. When Mathew Kenny offered him employment in 1910 in the same field, he moved to Stockholm and in 1911 they formed a business partnership. That year they added the North West Land Co. agency to their rapidly expanding business and Holger became the popular owner of one of the first Ford cars in the district.

Hogarth and Clandinnen sold their stock to Sam Stevenson and their building to Emil Persson and John Wickberg, from Nya Stockholm who in turn left the district after selling to Algot and Franz Rydberg, agents for McCormick Deering. Hogarth and Clandinnen had been popular in the village and their departure was the occasion for a big party. Mappin and Gent served the refreshments. As the party was breaking up someone whose sense of humor overcame his good judgement, surreptitiously introduced a quantity of purgative tablets into the cider. No doubt the party was long and well remembered by the busy bartenders.

Sam Stevenson and Teckla, eldest daughter of the Alex Stenbergs, were married in May of 1910. The following year they moved to Plunkett taking the stock from the store. They returned in 1914

and settled on a farm S. W. of the village. Joe Kish and Steve Veres bought the Stevenson building in 1911 and stocked it with hardware. With the departure of Hogarth the band lacked a leader so the arrival of Joe Kish, who had performed professionally with a band in Cleveland, Ohio, was opportune. He organized a second band in the Hungarian community and also agreed for a small fee to conduct the village band. Their numbers were augmented by Elis Jacobson, Wm. Persson, Fritz Stenberg and Jim Baugh, a fine young chap from Summerberry who taught in the village school for two years. They continued to practice and improve, increasing their repertoire. They frequently obtained outside engagements and were able to appear resplendent in full uniforms.

Another gentleman to make an appearance in the district around 1902 was John D. Gale. He had come west to Moosomin in 1892 from St. Catherines, Ontario, where he had had a music store. He was selling organs, pianos and Singer Sewing Machines in the west. When he arrived in Stockholm it was to take up a homestead south of the village. He purchased the Crosswell Hall in 1909 and moved into the village.

When the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Co. was formed in 1911 farmers in this district formed a local and purchased the International elevator. Valdemar Munch was their first agent. Dougald Lamont built a grocery store on the furthest north of his three lots on Ohlen St. which was managed by Mrs. Lamont. They also handled flour and feed from a chop house, built behind the hardware building. His father-in-law John Persson operated the chopper which was powered by a gas engine. They chopped from fifty to sixty bags per day at a service charge of ten cents per bag. Wm. Persson went to Venn to take up a homestead.

Kish returned to Cleveland in 1912 and the corner store was bought by Eric Erikson. The second floor of this building had been rented out as a pool room and for a short time Erikson used the ground floor as a machinery show room then, moving the machinery to the barn which Lamont had purchased from Alexander, he opened a confectionery shop where the young people congregated. The store was managed by Mrs. Erikson, who worked part time, while Elinda the eldest daughter clerked full time. In those times candy came in large containers. Hard candies of all sorts and some chocolates arrived in five gallon wooden pails. Marshmallows came in large glass bowls with metal lids. Popular candies of the time were, satin waffles, conversation lozenges, rosy girls, paper wrapped candy kisses and such licorice items as plugs, pipes, whips and whistles that retailed at 1c apiece. Peanuts and popcorn were also big sellers. Some popcorn came in long slim paper packages called "Long Tom", that also sold for 1c each. Apple and orange cider dispensed by the

glass from a keg or cooler were the most popular soft drinks and the ice cream was home made. This necessitated refrigeration and since there was no electricity, almost everyone had what was referred to as an ice house. This was usually a small insulated building erected over a hole in the ground. Some people just filled the hole with water in the coldest period of winter and covered the resulting ice with a thick layer of sawdust. Better results were obtained by packing well with sawdust blocks of ice that had been cut from the lake or a deep slough and lowered into the holes. From these houses ice could be readily removed as needed.

Erikson had nothing but bad luck in 1912 with his horses. First a two year old was lost down a lightly covered well, then the others got loose on the railroad tracks. A C.P.R. freight train struck the herd a mile and a half west of the village plowing through them without stopping till it arrived in Stockholm. Five horses were killed outright and several were struck or dragged, and injured. Like most people Eriksons entertained affection for their animals and this incident was quite a blow to the family, apart from the financial loss. Eric shot the injured, and sold the remaining horses, renting the farm to John Shivak who eventually bought it. That same year Eric built a small cottage just south of his own home where his mother-in-law Mrs. Johnson came to live. The Johnsons had come from the colony to live with the Eriksons in 1907. When Edils died in 1909 Mrs. Johnson went to the United States to her eldest son, but she was not happy away from Stockholm, hence her return in 1912.

After the terrible shotgun accident experienced by Alex Stenberg while still living on the farm one could expect that he would have lost all interest in hunting but that was not Alex's reaction. In 1912 a boot and shoe traveller happened along one fine day and Alex decided to take him hunting. Alex hitched up the democrat and they drove off. When they arrived at a suitable location Stenberg issued the orders as to which direction they would travel on their separate ways. Somebody got mixed up and Alex got peppered with shot on the side of his face. This time it was not a serious injury but it was enough to startle his wife, Swea, when he came home with his face all bespattered with blood. Even this second brush with fate failed to dampen his enthusiasm for hunting.

John Bateman who had farmed unsuccessfully in Alabama came north to join his brother Tom on a farm north of the village. With John to look after his farm Tom bought the Stromquist livery business and cottage. Tom had six teams of drivers and one of mules. The Kvinlaugs had discontinued threshing and Bateman employed Ab Raff to drive in his livery service. He had a fast team of hackneys that once made an emergency trip to Bangor and return, a

drive of twelve miles each way, in two hours and five minutes.

Svedberg lost his hotel and returned to the farm. This was the beginning of a business recession that commenced in 1912. Mappin left town to go farming and Bob Watt took over the butcher shop. In a few months he too gave it up. Fred Gent moved to Tantallon and



Mr. and Mrs. Dougald Lamont, Corinne and George

Steve Lisik moved to a farm that he had bought south of town. Only two general storekeepers weathered the bad times, Alex Stenberg and Doug Lamont. Gus Persson had built a small dwelling house north of the Persson boarding house. Kenny had been living in rooms back of his real estate office and needed larger living accom-

modation for a growing family, so he bought this house, enlarged it, and moved into it in 1913.

Although the village tax was only three mills, the council voted a small grant to assist the village band, the agricultural society, and built the first fire hall, a tiny building 16'x6'x7', just large enough to accommodate the ladders, buckets and extinguishers. Implement company agents had been active in selling machinery the first years and now it seemed that the only need was for some parts replacements. With lack of business and work the population was diminishing rather than growing so building was at a comparative standstill.

Dougald Lamont built an extension to the north side of his hardware joining it to the grocery store in 1913. This addition he partitioned, using the back section as a passage between the two departments and renting the front part to Gus Persson who had been appointed postmaster replacing Kenny. After his appointment as postmaster two rural mail routes were established. Holsteins had the Pioneer Route, through the Pioneer district five miles south of town to the West End, Round Lake. Ab Raff helped with the driving on this route. Tom Bateman had the route south and east down what is now No. 9 highway to the Nya Stockholm district. Erik Stromberg was a driver on this route. Douglas Macdonald left Stockholm to go into business for himself further west. The following fall Bill Persson, who had returned from proving up a homestead at Venn, rented his farm and replaced Douglas at Lamonts. The village officials in 1914 were: councillors: Alex Stenberg, V. Munch, Holger Munch, Mathew Kenny, secretary-treasurer; constable, John Bateman.

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## THE FIRST WORLD WAR YEARS

The first year of the first World War was a dry year and the farmers still had little purchasing power, so business continued to be slow. Even so, many changes were beginning to occur, and when 1915 produced the prairie's record crop business picked up. The war created a food scarcity, prices paid for farm products soared and grain was marketed at its all time high price. This caused local inflationary prices and raw prairie sold for \$16 per acre. Although 1916 was a rust year there was a fair yield which at the advanced prices brought the farmers a good income. They were replacing the homestead shacks with more substantial buildings and business continued to boom all through the war years.

Prosperity brought many changes. The C.P.R. built a new station with large attached living quarters in 1914 and a new agent, Wm. Larter and Mrs. Larter arrived to remain twenty one years. Steve



R. M. of Fertile Belt Band — 1915

Nagy, one of the section men, bought the Bunyak blacksmith shop and built a dwelling house just north of it which they occupied until 1928 when they retired and moved to B.C. Jack Hunter of the Pioneer Grain Co. built a house on the N. W. corner of Railway Ave. and Angus St. Holger Munch had been courting Irma, eldest daughter of Karl Sundberg. They were married in 1914 and rented the Bateman house. Later when the Hunter family went to live on their farm south of town Holger bought the Hunter house and the Munchs had it enlarged and took up residence there.

During the second year of the war the two bands joined forces under the leadership of Godfrey Persson and filled many engagements, one of which was another trip to Brandon to play at the fair. The village, duly appreciative, built a bandstand for the grand sum of \$90.13 and the villagers went about their evening chores to strains of martial music. There was an act passed by the Saskatchewan Government offering to subsidize government approved accommodation which, for a number of years helped to keep hotel proprietors out of the red. Dennis Downes applied for a license and subsidy and reopened the hotel. Wm. Laing who had for a number of years been interested in introducing newer and better varieties of seed grain, and who was actively interested in the agricultural society, replaced Valdemar Munch as buyer for the Co-op Elevator Co. The



Beaver Lumber Co., quick to take advantage of the building boom, opened a second lumber yard on the west side of Ohlen St. and employed Kenny and Munch as agents. In the early days of most villages the road facing the railway was the main street, but gradually, as the village grew, other streets became the main thoroughfares. Ohlen was becoming the main street in Stockholm. The crop of that fall gave rise to an expression often heard that there have been but two bumper crops on the prairies: 1915 and next year. There had been some intermittent agitation through the years for a town hall. The idea was definitely shelved by the council in 1915.

Wm. Persson and Edith Johnson, neice of Kristoffer Landine, were married in 1916 and when Gus Persson went back to full time farming Bill was appointed postmaster the year of his marriage. Edith worked in the post office while Bill continued to clerk for Lamont. Several other changes took place. G. L. Wahlberg who at that time was farming land one mile south of town bought the Downes house. A widow from the colony, Mrs. A. Jacobson, with her two small sons Benny and Charlie moved into a house, newly built for her north of Eriksons. Lucas a labourer built a small house two blocks north on the east side of Ohlen.

The Bird farm in the valley had passed from them to E. Shoulden, to Peter Hegi to Per S. Stendahl, whose sons are the present owners. When Hegi sold out and retired he invested some money in Stockholm, building a cottage on Railway Ave. east of Angus St. Eric Erikson applied for a restaurant licence for his corner shop and he and Dennis Downes conducted a campaign for the "Patriotic Fund". A lot of the land in the district was owned by the G. W. Allan Land Co. Kenny and Munch became its agents and sold land on a crop payment plan. A radical change was effected when one of the oldtimers, Alex Stenberg, sold his business to the proprietor of the Stockholm Supply Co. Stenbergs retired to a cottage on his farm on the southern outskirts of the village where they lived for many years. D. Lamont built a large new home on the east side of Angus St., which is now the property of H. N. Clements. The Patriotic Fund had not been subscribed to very generously so there was a tax of 1½ mills levied and a poll tax of \$2 imposed on those who were not on the assessment roll.

The Stockholm Rural Telephone Co. was organized and received permission to build a line in the village with four circuits south of town. W. S. Persson was made sub-agent. Lamont had repossessed a building which had been erected by a shoemaker during the boom. When the shoemaker defaulted in his payments Doug moved the building to the north of his little chain of business buildings. The Telephone Co. purchased this building and here the switchboard was located. In exchange for supplying light and heat, W. S. Per-

sson was allowed the privilege of using the building for a post office. Lamont added a shoe department to his business in the location abandoned by the post office. The long distance line was also moved from the old Stenberg store, where it had been installed in the early days, to the new telephone office. The Luton Telephone Co. which was formed in 1914 had included and serviced the Excel district north of town. After the introduction of the telephone switchboard in Stockholm, Tom Brunskill and Harold Sundberg of the Excel district agitated successfully for a change in their area. As a result the Excel Rural Telephone Co. was formed with their lines also going through the Stockholm exchange. Brunskill and Sundberg served as president and secretary of this company until it joined the Stockholm Telephone Co. in 1948.

Wm. Laing and Augusta Landine, daughter of K. P. Landine were married in 1917. G. L. Wahlberg had moved to a farm in the valley on the north shore of Round Lake, so the Laings moved into the Wahlberg house for a few months before buying the Hegi cottage which they enlarged and remodelled to become their permanent home. Wm. Laing also purchased the corner building from Erikson. Augusta who had substituted for her cousin in the post office before Edith's son, Willard, was born, was now replaced by Mary Dahl. During the last year of the war the Nils Dahls moved to town and lived above Rydberg's shop while Nils built a home on the west side of Angus St. into which they moved in 1919. Two more marriages occurred in 1918. John Gale married Minnie Belle Moffitt, a dressmaker from Moosomin. Minnie Belle came originally from S. Carolina and now past eighty still charms her listeners with her ready smile and soft southern accent. In 1922 the Gales bought and moved into the Wahlberg house where Mrs. Gale still resides, a widow since 1940. Albert Balog, the blacksmith, married Mrs. Jacobson. He bought the Titman house and moved it once more, this time to the north side of Assiniboine Ave. between Ohlen and Angus streets. In 1918 Kenny and Munch moved to a new office on the west side of Ohlen St. and Kenny acquired the Ford agency two years later. Only one fire occurred during the war years when the Kenny residence burnt in 1918, after which W. S. Persson bought the three Kenny lots.

The village people were saddened in 1918 by their only casualty of the war, when, on Sept. 29, Mr. and Mrs. Alex Stenberg received word that their elder son, Fritz, had been killed in action.

The first World War ended a period which could be regarded as the true pioneer era of this community. The way of life and customs and behaviour of the people had not changed much prior to 1919. People worked and played with enthusiasm, argued often and were prone to settle arguments with their fists, yet they held no

grudges and could be fighting one minute and friendly the next. Morning and afternoon coffee breaks were well established Scandinavian customs. For those who had time for a social life, we are told that times were much livelier than they are to-day. People gathered together and made their own fun. In their homes they grouped about the organ and sang, or they played games, and the men enjoyed competing in feats of strength. There were card parties where there were as many as sixteen to twenty players who met weekly for whist. Poker playing and pool tournaments were also popular with the men. Everybody attended the concerts and plays which were generally staged by church groups, and the annual box social was an event of the season. In the earliest days a dance club was formed that met fortnightly in Croswell's Hall. In winter young people went by sleigh and team to Jacobson's slough for skating and a fire was kindled by the side of the slough to go to for warmth. Shrove Tuesday was often the occasion for a sleighing and skiing party in the ravines. Summer brought a greater variety of outdoor entertainment. Since the village is only eleven miles from Round Lake, swimming, fishing and boating were popular. Annual picnics and sports days were important events. The bands and ball teams both practiced many hours in preparation. Refreshment booths were hastily assembled with a lavish use of poplar boughs, and the whole family attended and shared the labor and fun of the festivities.

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## BETWEEN THE WORLD WARS

Immediately following World War I Stockholm experienced the period of the greatest progress in its history followed by a two year depression when the inflationary prices of the later war years were suddenly deflated. During the middle and later 1920's, conditions settled down to a normal state of slow and steady progress. When wheat rose to \$2.06 in 1918 the price was set and farmers received the ceiling price plus coupons. Many farmers believed the coupons to be worthless and some threw them away while others sold them. They all lived to regret their hasty actions when they saw speculators, mostly from Esterhazy, who had bought coupons for as little as five cents taking a sizeable profit a few months later, when the coupons were redeemed for sixty cents.

The system of electing a village council was again changed within the province in 1919 and the councillors were elected on a one, two, three year basis. Their replacements were to serve for three year terms. The first councillors to be elected under this system were, Wm. Laing, D. Lamont, chairman, and H. Munch. Because of the continuation of high returns for farming, the village experienced its

greatest year of expansion in 1919. Early in the year the Royal Bank opened a local branch with Nesbitt Calvert as the first manager. The Beaver Lumber Co., which had begun a profitable business through Kenny and Munch, bought out the Lamont lumber business and built a large shed on the old location of the Alexander Hotel on Railway Ave. They stocked the shed with a complete line of building supplies and installed Russell Bell as manager. The first garage in the village was built by Alex Stenberg on Railway Ave. east of the hall and rented to two mechanics, Dupre and Lepire. Victor Grimeau, a farmer from the valley, built a dwelling just west of the school which he rented to Dupre. Lepire, brother to Mrs. Dupre, boarded there until 1922 when he married Nellie Dahl. The following year they left to make their home in California. In the late fall of 1922 the garage burnt and the Dupre family left the district. During these years Stuart Stenberg had returned home from St. John's College, Winnipeg, and worked for a short time for local firms and then joined the staff of the Royal Bank. When Alex Stenberg rebuilt his garage in 1923 he persuaded his son to leave the bank and to take over the garage.

Jens and Mrs. Olson from the Swedish colony took out a boarding house licence and bought the Munch residence which they operated as a boarding house for many years while Jens did draying and later drove a grain truck for Wm. Laing. In the meantime Doug Lamont had built a 1½ storey house west of the Laing cottage on Railway Ave. which the Munchs rented until 1925. Jim Dong of Esterhazy applied for a restaurant licence in 1919, purchased the old Kenny office and opened the first cafe in Stockholm. Happy Young and Charlie Tom were the first genial proprietors.

In 1919 Kenny purchased the balance of section 25 and all the available land within the village limits. Of this he retained twenty nine acres, along the eastern border of the village, for himself on which he built a 30'x50' red brick 1½ storey home; the balance he had surveyed. A part of this latter area became known as the St. Joseph subdivision where the Hungarian Community Hall, Separate School and the residence of the Sisters of Social Service were eventually located. The complete story of this community is being written by the present parish priest, Monsignor Paul Santha D.D. Our only comment is that researchers in the field of social welfare would be well advised to study the retirement plan of the older folk in the Hungarian Community. On large lots which could permit the keeping of a cow, or chickens, or a vegetable and fruit garden they build neat little homes; all are now serviced with electricity and have well cared for yards. Their flower gardens, a riot of colour from spring till fall, are a delightful addition to the village scenery. They are close to their church and friends and are easily

accessible for visits from children and grandchildren. The limited amount of work required to tend homes, gardens, and animals provides sufficient exercise to keep them active and free from boredom, so they remain healthy in body and mind to a ripe old age.

Another building changed ownership twice in the same year when Mascals from Kipling bought the Burnside house and built a store on the corner of the same lot. They sold out to Joe Hegi and moved to California, leaving behind a daughter, Ethel, who had married John Chelle, a young farmer from north of town. Hegi opened a poolroom and barber shop on this location.

Douglas Macdonald had enlisted and served all through the first World War and on his return took a position in Winnipeg from whence he was a frequent visitor to Stockholm. In the fall of 1919 he and Bill Persson bought the Lamont general store stock excluding the hardware which was bought by A. L. Wall in the spring of 1920. They all continued to rent the Lamont buildings. Wall came from Hyas where he had recently married a young school teacher, Olga Olson. Olga was the third daughter of the Reverend A. G. Olson, hence their move to the Stockholm district. They had a large cottage style home built on the N.W. corner of Railway Ave. and Esterhazy St. and so became neighbors to the Laings.

With the sale of his hardware business, D. Lamont the senior citizen of the village was also the last of the first footers to retire. The Lamonts had had two children, a son George and a daughter Corinne, who had attended college and university, first in Brandon and later in Winnipeg. After retiring from business in 1919 they remained in the village for some years to manage the farms that they had acquired, finally moving to Winnipeg in 1928. Two years later Mrs. Lamont passed away. Dougald commuted between Stockholm and Winnipeg for a number of years until he too passed away in Winnipeg in 1948 ending an active and colorful career at the age of 88.

Two of the oldest and longest surviving businesses of the village were owned and operated as partnerships. The first formed was the firm of Macdonald and Persson. This seemingly indestructible partnership is still in existence, and Douglas and Bill are the only villagers still actively engaged in business who had witnessed the half century of growing pains which contributed to the development of the village prior to the Provincial Jubilee Celebration. They added a butcher shop and conducted a livestock shipping service. Since 1948, Douglas has managed the store while Bill has attended full time to his duties as postmaster. The other partnership was that of Munch and Clements. In 1919 Holger and Mrs. Munch and small daughter, Bobbie, went to Denmark for a holiday. After their return the Kenny Munch partnership was dissolved. Holger built a

large white brick office building facing Ohlen St. on the N. E. corner of Railway Ave. where he opened his own real estate office in 1920. Two years later he opened a lumber yard across the track. In 1923 he was joined by Herbert N. Clements, the son of a well known merchant from the neighboring town of Esterhazy. To enter the partnership Bert had resigned his position as manager of a bank in Rocanville. His experience so gained was invaluable to the new partnership. Holger was secretary-treasurer of the municipality, a post he had held since 1919, and they continued as agents for several land and insurance companies, and the International Harvester Co. They also increased their lumber business in 1924 when they bought out the Beaver Lumber Co. yard and stock. Their partnership endured until 1953 when Bert bought out Holger's interest. During the depression of the 1930s they had closed down the lumber yard. The building and property they sold in 1948 to Joseph J. Herperger. Bert still operates the real estate, insurance and machine agencies as the Clements Farm Equipment Co. Holger, predeceased by his wife Irma in 1953, although retired still resides in the village in a comfortable white brick home that they built in 1925 and which he modernized in recent years.

These four men, together with Wm. Laing, who passed away in 1953, were actively engaged in the affairs of the village, serving long terms on the Public School and United Church boards and the village council. They sponsored and participated in such sports as foot ball, soft ball, hard ball, tennis and curling and backed every worthwhile enterprise that the village ever became interested in.

The years between the two world wars brought many other changes. Until the end of the first World War livestock was marketed by sale to drovers. Wm. Laing and Wm. Persson had started a cattle buying and butcher business in 1918 which was continued in 1919 by Macdonald and Persson. The first C.P.R. corral had been built in 1906 and was replaced in 1925. Andrew and Walford Olson built and opened a second garage on the S. E. corner of Ohlen and Assiniboine in 1921. This was a year of adjustment after the high prices at the end of the war. The prices paid for wheat and livestock dropped sharply and many farmers found that they had bought too much on time. This in turn hit the business men of the village. Feeling that the district was unable to support more than one garage, Walford returned to the farm at the end of the war. Andrew remained through 1922 but when prices continued to drop he too gave up and returned to the farm. They sold the building to A. L. Wall who moved it to his farm.

After the death of Charles Sahlmark, his widow had a cottage built on a lot just south of the United Church in which she resided but one year before returning to the farm. When W. B. Alexander

became manager of the Royal Bank in 1923 he purchased the Sahlmark cottage. Mrs. Alexander was an active member of the United Church Ladies' Aid and they both joined the local tennis, curling and bridge clubs so they were greatly missed when he was transferred to Winnipeg some ten years later.

Among new arrivals to come after World War I were some who stayed but a short time, such as the Gordon Parkers. Gordon first clerked in the Macdonald and Persson meat market, then rented it. In 1923 he built another dance hall between the Holstein residence and Kenny's office. Macdonald and Persson bought this hall in 1927 and D. S. Macdonald had purchased the Kenny home in 1925. Dr. John Grant, who was the first doctor to settle with any degree of permanency, came from Brandon early in the 1920's. A few years later he married Muriel H. Shewan, also of Brandon. They dwelt in the Lamont cottage and became very popular with everybody. It was with sincere regret that their friends gathered at the Macdonalds in 1927 to bid them goodbye when Dr. Grant received an appointment to the staff of the medical college in Ames, Iowa.

There were others who came to stay for longer such as Frank and Rosie Kuzbach who came to Canada from CzechoSlovakia on their honeymoon in 1921 and remained when Frank obtained employment on the C.P.R. maintenance crew. Their first home was in a railway car, then they bought a small house from John Schaufert on the corner of Assiniboine and Esterhazy St. They enlarged the house and here they lived for a number of years. It speaks well for the village that, although they were transferred away from Stockholm in 1942, when Frank was retired in 1955 they returned to live among old friends.

Jack and Joe Segall purchased the Stockholm Trading Co. in 1923 and renamed the business Segall Bros. Four years later Joe brought a bride from Regina. Although Jack went on to Alberta Joe and Florence remained in Stockholm many years, and here their two children Barry and Shirley grew up. Joe served on the village council for a number of years and Barry was a popular young athlete. In 1952 they sold their business and rented their building to Arnold Danielson. When Segalls left Stockholm it was necessary to hire the town hall to accommodate the many friends who wished to honor them, a true indication of the high regard held for them by the district.

There were more changes among the elevator companies. In 1923 the Pool Elevator Co. took over the Co-op, retaining Wm. Laing as their buyer. Bill also did a brisk business as agent for the Imperial Oil Co. and was the first agent here to operate an oil delivery service for farmers. The Pioneer elevator burned down in 1926 and rather than rebuild it they bought the Liberty elevator and engaged V.

Munch as agent. The State Elevator Co. built on the old Pioneer location in 1928 and sold out to Western the following year. Moody Patterson of the Excel district became their first agent.

Albert Raff married Amanda Anderson and they moved to Detroit in 1923 where Ab obtained work at the Ford Plant. They returned home four years later and bought the Jacobson house. For many years Mandy was night operator for the telephone company and Ab. was the lineman. He also operated a paint and paper hanging business until 1952 when they moved to Churchill, Man. Our village has always been short of funds with which to finance its projects and so the times when volunteer help was needed were frequent. Since Albert and Amanda were always present on these occasions their departure meant a great loss to the village as well as to their personal friends.

The Telephone Co. decided to make a change in 1925 and they moved the office building to the west side of Forslund St. north of the lane. Macdonald & Persson built a new post office north of the Persson residence and it is there that the community is still being served by the postal department. Mae Kvinlaug was the clerk in the post office at the time and Esther Kvinlaug became the new telephone company agent and operator. After the office was moved D. Lamont built a two room addition to the north side of his department store. In 1927 the north half was rented to Pete Biro who opened a confectionery and barbershop; the other section was leased for some time by Chas. Kenyon, third generation member of a family of English watchmakers, who for a number of years wrote an interesting column for the Esterhazy Observer.

An irate group of village women descended upon the Council one fine summer day in 1928 and demanded that it take action concerning the eviction of certain undesirable citizens but, although the Council did take what action it legally could, bootlegging continued to flourish until the beer parlor was opened in 1935. The first and last cement sidewalks were poured by A. G. Anderson at this time. These are still in good condition and have only required minor repairs. Much of the wheat froze in 1928 but it was a fairly heavy yield so business was good and since many farmers were making the conversion from horses to tractors a lot of machinery was being sold by our implement dealers.

A. L. Wall had taken over the John Deere agency along with the Lamont hardware business. He was also agent for the North Star Oil Co. when they installed storage tanks in 1929. Late in the 1920s John Bateman sold out to John Drotar, and the Hegi poolroom became the property of Steve Kato of Regina who rented the premises to Steve Toth. Wm. Persson was remarried in 1929 to M. Zetta Fanset, a North Battleford girl who had taught in the local Separate



School. A period of moderate prosperity for the community ended in 1929. International Nickel which had made several citizens rich on paper was tumbling every day. The few who had been gambling in rye on the exchange were saying that they wished they had it in bottles. The years that followed were grim years for farmers who were scourged with drouth and its offspring dust which penetrated everything everywhere. Sloughs were drying up and with false hopes farmers watched each cloud come up and then continued to water stock and gardens from wells that were going dry too. What grain was harvested did little more than pay the cost of harvesting. New cars were out of the question and for those who could afford neither licence nor gas for the old ones the "Bennett Buggy" was born. This was a jalopy with the engine removed and a tongue added to which a team of horses was hitched for locomotion.

1930 brought the lowest grain prices since the nineties. Lacking enough feed and water, farmers were forced to sell their stock at impossibly low prices. The following year was one of extremes with the hottest and windiest spring and the most beautiful fall, marred by the worst crop failure in thirty one years and prices even lower than the previous year. In October the market price of wheat was 37 cents, of rye 18 cents, while hogs brought 3½ cents live weight, cows 1 cent, steers 1¼ cents and the top price for calves was 5½ cents.

The next year there was extensive cutworm damage and a long cold winter that seemed to dissolve the supply of fuel. In 1935 there was rust, and mosquitoes that plagued both people and stock. There was rust again in 1938 but a number of farmers had taken advantage of the new rust resistant Thatcher wheat and losses were not so heavy, but this was the year of the equine encephalitis outbreak so farmers had a variety in their troubles. With all the problems we still were not so unfortunate as other districts further south. By hard work and taking advantage of every available opportunity people did survive the ordeal and held on to their farms. Being a mixed farming area was a blessing as was having a progressive and alert Municipal Council. The building of No. 9 highway, a relief measure provided by the Conservative Government, brought work and some much needed cash. Further work was provided when the two highways were being gravelled in 1933 and 1934.

The village life reflected the fortunes of the farmers. At the onset of the depression three merchants were in businss: Macdonald & Persson, Segal Bros. and Sam Joseph, in the store built by Wm. Lamont. Regular dances were being held by the local five piece orchestra in the Macdonald & Persson hall and since it was one of the cheapest forms of entertainment they were fairly well patronized. The orchestra paid expenses and divided the profit but since

admission was only 25c for men and free to ladies they seldom made much and more often were merely providing entertainment for the masses. Since revenue from the hall wasn't paying taxes and expenses, Macdonald & Persson remodelled the building and moved their general store stock across the street in 1933.

There occurred two fires in 1930; the first when John Drotar's house burned down and the second when the corner poolroom burned. There was some suspicion that the second fire had been set and a trial was held but the accused was acquitted. The village purchased John Drotar's livery barn and, to provide some earning power for the unemployed, had the barn dismantled and used the lumber to build a curling rink which they continue to rent to the curling club for a small fee. Alongside the curling rink an outdoor skating rink was built to provide skating and hockey. During the summer months this area was first used as a tennis court. The double life of this little plot created a certain amount of bickering between the tennis and hockey clubs. The wires of the lighting arrangement installed by the hockey club were a source of annoyance to the tennis players, and their toll of damaged bulbs and wires irritated the hockey team managers.

The C.P.R. curtailed their two-a-day train service April 6, 1931 to one running east through Stockholm Monday, Wednesday and Friday evening and returning west by noon Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. The Royal Bank closed its doors March 15, 1937, transferred the manager, James Fraser, to another point and the remaining accounts to the Esterhazy branch, and the "Big Four" curling team of Macdonald, Persson, Munch and Fraser lost their skip. There were other business changes too, not because business warranted it but because other fields looked greener to people who were desperately trying to improve their lot. D. Lamont had built a blacksmith shop in 1930 which he rented to John Lindberg. Five years later Lindberg and his landlord fell out so Lindberg built on the N. E. corner of Assiniboine and Dubuc streets. Barney Farkas built a dwelling on the west side of Forslund and operated a shoe repair shop in the front portion of his house.

For a short time in 1934 part of the Lamont block was rented to Emil Franson who started a chicken hatchery; from there he moved to the Macdonald & Persson butcher shop where he remained another year before leaving for his present location in Prince Albert. A Dr. S. Z. Bennett practised here for a short time also but people couldn't afford the luxury of calling a doctor when they were ill so his stay was brief. Two years later Dr. L. G. Magid rented office space and a room at the hotel. For a short time Joe Koczka, a farmer, moved into the Kenny office on Ohlen St. then the property of A. L. Wall, and opened a grocery store. When Koczka moved out

Dr. Magid moved in. He used the front section as an office and the rear for a living apartment. Here he remained until we lost him to Esterhazy when the hospital was opened there in 1940. With the exception of a few months when Dr. B. Solomon was here, we have been without a doctor ever since. His building empty, A. L. Wall moved his hardware stock across to his own premises. The Lamont blacksmith shop was bought in 1935 by Julius Plosz, who remained till 1947 when he joined the C.P.R. maintenance crew. For some ten years there were three blacksmith shops open for business.

Of those to commence business in the 1930s only two remained. Wm. F. Nagy the son of Steve Nagy bought the confectionery stock of his brother-in-law Pete Biro in 1933. The Biros went to B.C. and the Nagys rented the Alexander cottage which they purchased in 1938. That year too they purchased the Lamont block. They had gradually worked up a large general store trade. The interior has been altered so that it is divided into three sections, the furthest north being a poolroom and the central section, a general store. Mrs. Nagy manages the other section, which is a gift shop, news stand and confectionery. It is known as Keith's Kandy Kounter and it is the property of their elder son Keith, who is married and living in Toronto. The other merchant to remain is James R. Junek the son of Mr. and Mrs. Joe Junek of Esterhazy. He married Violet, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. T. S. Brunskill, in 1937, and after the Royal Bank of Canada vacated the Laing building Jim and his father opened a hardware store there.

The same year Moody Patterson and his family moved to Winnipeg. He was replaced in the Western Grain Co. elevator by Jack Halliwell from Bethune. The Halliwells first rented, then purchased the Lamont cottage. They were to remain for almost twenty years, during which time they participated actively in village affairs. Creighton, the younger of their two sons, who was then in public school is now a member of the R.C.A.F. serving in the far north. Dean, the elder son, was attending Regina College. Dean commenced collecting academic honors before he was 15. He was one of the twelve grade XII students to win a Governor General's gold medal in 1940. While only 18 years of age, he graduated in Arts from the University of Saskatchewan in 1943 and then joined the airforce. Shortly after he received the rank of Pilot Officer the war ended and he returned to the same university, where he took his Master's Degree in 1948. He then went to Toronto for his Bachelor of Library Science in 1949. At present he is Assistant Librarian at the Murray Memorial Library in Saskatoon.

Being a new community there had been few deaths until after the First World War but between the two wars many more plots in the cemetery were being tended with loving care. Human beings

in all localities experience the whole gamut of human emotions both joyful and sorrowful. When older folk in our village passed on the community felt sorrow, when the younger ones were taken their friends knew grief and the families involved endured anguish softened by the little solicitous acts of their neighbors, which country folk are so quick to offer, and by the sustaining strength of their faith. Among the first old timers to go were: Mrs. Dahl in 1923, Eric Erikson, in the following year, became a victim of the asthma that he had endured for so many years. The next year John Persson fell and broke his hip and died within the month. Matthew Kenny left the district to look for a new place to settle in 1925 and while he was gone his wife passed away. In 1926 Edith Persson died of T.B. leaving her husband and a young son, Willard. Valdemar Munch succumbed to a heart attack in 1938. Much younger were Winnifred (Bobbie) Munch, age nine, who was taken with pneumonia and Olive Olson, just entering her teens, who died of a lung infection. The Laings and Kuzbachs each lost an infant son. Axel von Holstein Rathlou Jr. was buried Christmas Eve day, 1936, having just successfully completed all examinations but his oral toward his Ph.D. Degree in Geology from the University of Toronto.

At this period in the history of the village business was passing into the hands of younger married men so that while there was loss through death there was some compensation in the large number of infants that were being born during those same years.

With all the worry that was experienced by everybody with the poverty of the 30's there were other compensations too. With lack of cash for travelling and expensive entertainment people again became more dependent on one another. In the homes entertainment was on a larger scale than ever. There were regular dinner and bridge parties and in the afternoon there were coffee parties. It has been a local custom for women to prepare for a large number of guests on their birthdays. When the callers arrived with their gifts it was to sit down to a regular banquet. Birthday parties alone assured one of a goodly number of coffee parties in a year. Tennis, softball, hockey and skiing provided cheap entertainment and so did camping, and Sundays saw the beaches at the lake crowded with folk on picnics.

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## THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Enlistments in the three armed forces by both boys and girls commenced the year the war was declared and continued all through the war. Fifty-three young people whose parents resided in the village and district tendered their services. Six of them failed to return.

The local Red Cross organization was exceptionally active and the

tremendous task of being secretary-treasurer rested in the capable hands of Gladys Halliwell throughout the war years. Every corner of the district was organized into quilt groups and sewing and knitting groups. No one with two hands was forgotten. We have a very simple and effective system of operation in Stockholm, which I suspect is common to many villages, whereby all citizens are commandeered to volunteer for work by the executives of local organizations. In 1941 another group, The Patriotic League, was organized specifically to care for sons and daughters of local families who were on overseas service.

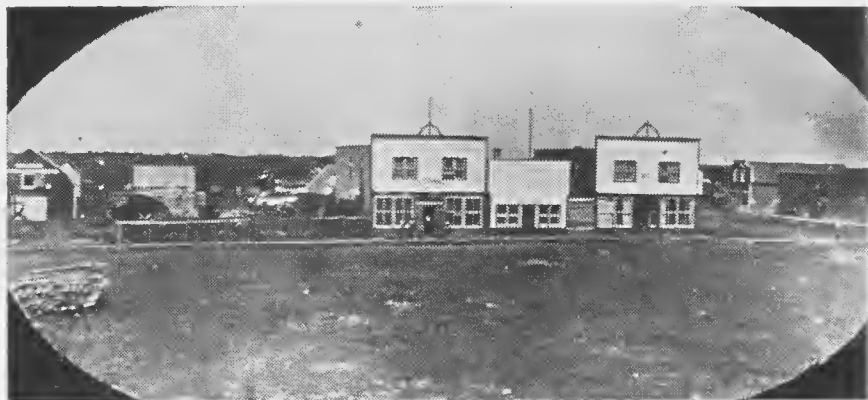
The war effort called for other voluntary services when registration and rationing were instituted, and again when the war loans were floated. The women of the village willingly sat through tedious days of issuing ration books each spring. Three young matrons of the village even enrolled in a mechanic's course in Melville and drove back and forth regularly to attend all the lectures provided by the expert mechanics of Walters Bros. Garage. The men conducted six successful war loan campaigns. The two men, who probably were the most energetic salesmen, were Tom Brunskill and Jack Halliwell. Every Saturday found the pretty young high school girls out on the streets, dressed in Miss Canada costumes, selling war savings stamps. During the mass registration of all Canadians sixteen years and over, almost all the young adult members of the village took turns working at tables in the Community Hall where those who registered received identification cards. Thereafter when others in the community reached the age of sixteen they were registered at the local post office. The postmaster was also responsible for selling war savings stamps and issuing war savings certificates, and we are pleased to be able to say that many books were issued.

There was something in the nature of a mass migration out of the village and district during the war years. The village came to be peopled by children and older folk. The boys joined the services, and many young girls and several young married couples moved to Ontario to work in factories. Attractive wages in factories also caused many students to leave high school before they should have and, lacking older students to keep them in their places, the younger ones grew up too quickly.

Like the famous fires of London and Chicago, the worst fire in our history was probably a blessing in disguise but it was with a feeling of nostalgia that the old timers saw the old Stenberg and Stevenson stores and the original Kenny office burn to the ground. It occurred in April 1941 when the buildings were the property of Joe Segal, Art Young and Wm. Laing. The fire started early in the morning, upstairs in the Laing property, then rented to Juneks. It was with some difficulty that Juneks and Brunskills, who were overnight

guests, made their escape to safety through an upstairs window, over a shed roof and down to the ground. Art Young too saved little, but Segalls, having more time, evacuated their premises pretty thoroughly before the fire spread. There is something morbidly fascinating about watching a fire and as usual the whole village turned out either to help or to watch and listen as cartons of shells exploded and barrels of fuel went rolling skyward in huge roaring bundles of flame and smoke. With a complete disregard for safety, all who were able carried out moveable possessions from the burning buildings, while watchful mothers took periodic roll calls of their young. It is an astonishing fact that no one was injured in the fire but Tom Brunskill, who received bad burns to his hands when the fire started. Hard work on the part of the volunteer fire department, working with fire chief Persson, kept the fire from spreading to the nearby garage.

The aspect of the fire which might be considered beneficial to the village was in the rebuilding. Segalls built a much larger, modern



Railway Avenue — 1906

looking building with living quarters at the rear. Juneks bought the Laing lot and the neighboring site of the cafe. On the corner they built a 30'x90' hardware and tinsmithing shop with roomy living quarters above. Five years later they expanded and built a 26'x60' addition on the other lot which at present is used as a large appliance show room. Jim is an expert tinsmith and his services are requisitioned by people from many neighboring towns.

Although farm income did not reach the high of the first World War, by 1943 farmers did enjoy some prosperity. This new purchasing power, coming as it did on the heels of a depression that left people with a need to renew all equipment, furnishings and wardrobes, would have been a wonderful boon for farmers and local merchants alike had they been able to spend it locally but goods

were scarce and, worse still, by 1943 retail stores were rationed and their buying quota was based on 1942 purchases. Strangely enough some merchants appeared to have gained such information in advance and bought goods beyond their normal requirements in 1942, but those who didn't were unable to obtain sufficient stock to satisfy the increase in the orders of their customers. Thus, the unfair situation existed whereby merchants, who had struggled through the depression sacrificing all their capital and then going in debt to carry their customers over the bad times, were unable to take advantage of their fair share of the cash trade, when that cash was finally available.

Again as during the first World War there were many business changes. When Stuart Stenberg enlisted in the R.C.A.F., he sold his garage to Louis Matsalla, a young chap who came to the district to teach school and stayed when he married Mary Kaczur, the daughter of a local farmer. The Stockholm Savings and Credit Union received its charter in 1942. Jack Halliwell was the first secretary-treasurer and manager, a position that is now held by Cliff McDougall, the present Pool Elevator agent. That year also Tom Brunskill retired from active farming, rented his land, bought the Farkas property and moved to town. John Lindberg, unable to follow his trade any longer, sold his blacksmith shop and house to Deszo Jacob of Tantallon and moved to Stockholm with his wife and family.

The cemetery hedge which had been planted in 1929 grew to such proportions that it became a regular nuisance to keep it trimmed. Three spruce trees were planted to fill in the gaps of the otherwise solid growth of caragana. The final touch was added to complete the present attractive appearance of the cemetery, when field stone gateways were built in the heat of the summer of 1942 by Hugo Olson and W. S. Persson.

Sten Stenberg had completed his term of overseas service and returned home by 1944. He decided to open a general store in the neighboring town of Dubuc and made the move, selling his home to Louis Matsalla. The Alex Stenbergs decided to move to Dubuc to be closer to their children. They sold their farm to John Seman who commenced the first large scale milk delivery service in the village. This service was discontinued four years later and milk is now obtained locally from the Jacobs or from creameries through the merchants. Since 1941 John Seman has been responsible for dragging sections of No. 9 and No. 22 highways, which converge one mile east of Stockholm. Many tourists passing through have told us that nowhere in the province are the roads better maintained than are these sections.

Privately, everyone entertained the returning servicemen at din-

ners, card parties and at coffee and conversation. As a village enterprise, at the close of the war there was a large meeting held in the United Church and a Rehabilitation and Welcoming Committee was organized to formally welcome the boys as they returned home from overseas. It was planned to present to each one an engraved ring and to make the presentations at a dance. Since the boys returned in small groups, there were several of these functions, all well attended by happy crowds eager to greet returning friends and relatives.

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## LATER YEARS

Immediately after the war there was another flurry of building and increased business. The long empty Munch and Clements lumberyard was purchased by Joseph J. Herperger and stocked with paint, building hardware, and lumber from the Saskatchewan Timber Board.

Several of the boys, who had been recently discharged from the services, planned to open businesses. The four Molnar brothers Steve, Jim, Joe and John bought a lot on Ohlen Street and started an electrical and welding business. Shortly afterwards, Steve and John became employed by their brother-in-law, Joe Herperger. Harry Kenyon followed in his father's footsteps and became the fourth generation of watchmakers. Stan Anderson, who had married Dagmar Erikson, planned to start a sash and door factory and built a shop and an attractive looking home on Dubuc Street across the road from Kenyons. Joe Gera went into partnership with a farmer from south of town and built a welding and repair shop on Railway Ave. at the western extremity of the village. Ralph Wall started a trucking service and Verne Brown rented the poolroom of his brother-in-law Wm. Nagy.

All of these brave efforts failed sooner or later. Perhaps the district was not large enough to support them but whatever the cause, Ralph Wall left for B.C., his younger brother, Robert, continued the service for a time before he too left to join the air force. The Molnar brothers left to work elsewhere. Joe Gera sold his interest to his partner Ray Tranberg and moved to Ontario. Ray also has the local Co-op Oil agency. The Stanley Andersons moved to Nanaimo B.C. after selling their house to a retired farmer, George Nelson, and his shop to Roy Meston. Roy remodelled the shop to make a home for his bride, Irene Crosswell. Harry Kenyon sold his home to Jim Bacsu and they too moved to B.C.

For a time in the 1920's the Macdonald & Persson butcher shop was rented to Arthur Biden who settled in the district. With the death of Axel von Holstein the community was left without the



services of a veterinarian. During the later years Art Biden has served to fill this void.

Income Tax and War Time Prices Board inspectors made the first of many visits to the district in 1946. The first registration for hospitalization was conducted that year too.

Several new homes dotted the village and there were these new additions to the business section. John Koczka, a local farmer, built a garage on the site of the old Bunyak blacksmith shop and bought the house beside it. This shop has changed hands twice since then, first to Larry Chelle, who operated a trucking service, and more recently to Frank Banga, who operates a garage and oil and gas delivery service. A large cinder brick show room, warehouse and repair shop was built on the east side of Ohlen in 1947 by Persson brothers, sons of Gustaf Persson. They bought out Wall's hardware and took over the John Deere agency when the Walls retired to B.C. Perssons sold the Wall shop to the telephone company, who moved the switchboard back to the main street and sold the old office. This building is now the property of Steve Biro, a retired farmer, who moved it again. The wandering telephone office finally came to rest two blocks further north on Ohlen St. where another little group of retired farmers have built or remodelled homes.

The following year a large cafe built of cement brick was opened by Louis Zambol between the two garages on Ohlen St. The old Kenny garage passed from A. L. Wall to John Lisik who recently closed it and moved to Winnipeg. Jens Olson, drayman for many years, sold his home to Wm. Laing Jr. and moved to B.C. When Billy was discharged from the air force he married Joan McGregor, daughter of the local station agent. Wm. Laing Sr. retired from the elevator in 1946. The directors of the local Pool held a special meeting in his honour, and presented him with a model of the local elevator and a purse of money in token of their appreciation for his thirty-five years of excellent service. He continued as Imperial Oil agent in partnership with his son. The year following his father's death Billy quit the oil company and obtained an elevator agency with the Saskatchewan Pool Elevator Co. James Coleman, another returned man, became associated with Munch & Clements and was their master mechanic for several years until he moved to Churchill, Man. The Colemans rented their house to Ewald Kitsch and left Stockholm in 1956.

As early as 1928 the village councillors were trying to obtain the comfort of electric light and power for the villagers. The old system of outdoor street lamps had been long discontinued. People wandering about the village after nightfall had become resigned to cutting their way through the darkness with the beam of a flashlight. It was with great joy that housewives shined up the old lamps for the

last time and stored them away in attics or basements. This great change took place July 4, 1950 when the village was hooked up to the Saskatchewan Power Corporation lines. Those who had had no power revelled in the luxury of push button lighting, and owners of private plants gladly gave up struggling with balky engines and one temperamental windcharger and settled back to enjoy the privileges which are available with a higher voltage system. For a time there was a brisk business in electrical supplies and appliances.

The little old red firehall was replaced by a new cement brick building in 1952, large enough to house a recently purchased fire engine. That year will be remembered by many as the year of the big wind and hail storm. The whole pattern of summer weather was one of high winds and frequent rains that reached a climax on August 24 when there was a terrific hail storm and a windstorm of near cyclonic proportions. Out buildings on Frank Seman's farm and the top of John Seman's barn were gone with the wind, and 3,000 acres of crop land were completely hailed out. Village gardens were a total loss. Our rows of carrots looked like toothpicks in march formation and eight of our turkeys were hospitalized with broken wings as hailstones larger than golf balls bounced seven feet into the air. The supply of glass in the village was far from enough to replace broken windows, and the Macdonalds, with a total of fifty four broken panes, had the worst mess to clean up.

To H. N. Clements it brings other memories. The International Harvester Company were offering an all expense paid trip as a prize to the salesman in the Yorkton Branch area that year, and Bert won the prize. By July 1st they had disposed of thirty five new tractors alone, and had not his salesman, Jack Chelle, been committed to the San at Fort Qu'Appelle with T.B. and Bert himself been hospitalized with ulcers, he still feels that they could have bettered their sales. Notwithstanding this misfortune the firm of Clements Farm Equipment grossed one quarter of a million dollars in overall sales for the year. The trip? —he was too tired to take it!

The old Svedberg hotel changed hands many times in the intervening years and with the opening of the beer parlor it finally became a paying business. Curly Arlint was the current owner, and he had the outside of the building covered with brick siding. Two others of the many owners made additional improvements. Ferguson Wright who bought it in 1937 redecorated and refurnished the interior, and after it became the property of Frank Clarey in 1948 the interior was completely renovated and modern heating and plumbing systems were installed. He then built an addition on the east side which was equipped for a modern restaurant and he gave the old hotel a complete face lifting to match the outside finish on the cafe.

Another old landmark changed hands and lost its identity when Roy Munch of Esterhazy bought the old Croswell hall. It too had changed hands many times before Roy bought it from Rudolph Schaefer. He tore the top off the old building and built a one storey restaurant with living quarters at the rear. In 1948 it became the property of the present owner, Alex Shivak, who now operates a grocery business. The old Wm. Lamont store saw many changes too. Sam Joseph, the last general store merchant to own it, rebuilt and strengthened the second storey. He moved to Reeder, Man. with his family, and for a time it was used as a club room by the local branch of the Canadian Legion, which became quite active for a short time following the second World War. Since 1950 it has been the property of Joe Schaufert who remodelled the building, converting it into a locker plant and meat market.

There have been two diamond wedding celebrations among our pioneers. Three years after leaving Stockholm the Alex Stenbergs celebrated their sixtieth wedding anniversary. Many of their Stockholm friends of long standing gathered together with their newer Dubuc friends to honor this grand old couple at the home of their son-in-law and daughter, Norman and Sandra Nicholson. Six years later, there was another gathering held at the Mission church to honor the second happy couple of gentle old folk, the Z. E. Lindwalls. The Stenbergs and Mrs. Lindwall have passed on but in this year of 1956, Zacharias Lindwall remains at 93 years the oldest living member of the first settlers. Others than those already mentioned of the oldtimers, to



Mr. and Mrs. B. E. Lindwall  
on the Diamond Wedding Anniversary

have gone to their final reward are Mrs. Nils Johnson, Mrs. John Persson, Axel von Holstein Rathlou, John D. Gale, A. G. Anderson and Charles Kenyon.

After the second World War Douglas Macdonald, secretary of the local branch of the Canadian Legion, resurrected the idea of building a hall, that had been shelved so many years before. This time the community response was more favourable and he was given the honor of turning the first sod in the fall of 1949. The following year the Stockholm Legion Memorial Hall had its formal opening. Since

the last war several villagers have received diplomas for completing first aid courses. Two of the four instructors were local registered nurses, Mrs. Cecil Johnson and Mrs. Rodney Jacobson. The first village Civil Defence Unit was organized in 1955 and half a dozen members of the community have found time to take the Civil Defence Training Courses at Valley Centre. D. S. Macdonald is the local civil defence co-ordinator.

There are a few other changes in management. The Matsalla garage is being operated at present by Alex Landine, and Louis is the buyer for the old Western Grain Co. elevator which was recently purchased by the Pioneer Grain Co. who now operate two local elevators. The present station agent is Wm. Campbell. The lumberyard has again been closed and now there is another minor business recession.

The first World War created changes in social conduct that were magnified as a result of the second war. The large shifts in population from rural to urban centres gave young people a taste for travel and a greater sense of self dependence. Young people are realizing their greater need for higher education and technical training. The trend to uniformity within our country has become so complete that it is no longer possible to differentiate between the country born boy and his city born cousin.

The use of modern machinery on farms obviates the need for farmers to keep their sons at home. Fewer farmers means less business. Better transportation and all weather super highways means a further loss of trade to larger centres so it would seem that there is little hope of future expansion for small towns. However our village had broad well maintained streets, tidy inviting looking yards and the welcome on our doormat is both large and sincere.



**First Threshing Rig**

## X.

# THIS AND THAT

**L**ATE in the autumn of 1893, a party of surveyors in Red River carts called at the Holstein home, one which was known far and wide as "the house with the open door", a place where any weary wayfarer might stop for rest and refreshment. Hospitality was never refused there, and indeed some guests felt so welcome that they were loath to leave, with some who had come for a day or two staying for weeks. The surveyors rested briefly, then prepared to depart. They asked if they might leave two of their heavily loaded, canvass covered carts and four of their ponies until spring. This request was readily granted, and after the carts had been placed near the house and the horses had been stabled, good-byes were said. The long winter passed and spring came, but it brought no sign of the surveyors. The carts stood untouched for months, but finally in the early autumn the breezes carried an unpleasant odor, which was soon traced to the carts. There were found great hams, sides of bacon, cheese and other foods, in various stages of decay. In addition, there were a small folding table, four folding chairs, cutlery and cooking utensils, all of which were removed to the house to await the owners, who never returned. Prince, one of the ponies, became a special pet of the children, who spent many happy hours on his back, riding across the prairies. He lived for more than thirty years, and today every Holstein remembers him with affection.

\* \* \*

The summer picnic of 1890 was held at the home of C. O. Hofstrand and featured the colony's first wedding, at which O. C. Pearson of Winnipeg and Gunilla, a daughter of the pioneer Zakrison family, were married by Mr. Hofstrand.

\* \* \*

Mrs. Joseph Wahlstrom, the former Augusta Johanson, was the faithful organist of the colony's Swedish Lutheran Church for over eleven years.

\* \* \*

## A DAY TO REMEMBER

In the early autumn of 1936 there took place at Pioneer Hall one of the most colorful events in the history of the colony. In an effort



Picnic at Pioneer Hall — 1936

to rekindle interest in the handicrafts of the old world, and to stimulate interest in those of western Canada, a competition was sponsored by the Canadian National Railway. The people living in the three school districts of New Stockholm, Swea and Scandia co-operated in this project, and the two distinguished judges were the late Doctor Murray, first president of the University of Saskatchewan, and Mrs. Violet McNaughton, well-known newspaper columnist and pioneer co-operator. They awarded the second prize to the Swedish exhibit from the New Stockholm colony.

A great arch of greenery with bunting was erected at the entrance to the grounds, and the Swedish flag was flown beside the Union Jack. Many cherished heirlooms were displayed in the gaily decorated hall. Beautiful brass ware, old silver, rare pieces of luster ware were proudly placed on tables covered with exquisite cloths of Hardanger and of Swedish weaving. Carding, spinning and weaving were demonstrated. Long tables were loaded with every known Swedish dish, and of special interest to the judges was the table on which was displayed a great variety of Swedish cheese. For days before the big event there had been great activity in the local kitchens, where the Swedish ladies rolled out quantities of delicious thin brod and baked innumerable dainty dishes.

In the hall, attractive young ladies in beautiful Swedish costumes looked after the many visitors, who ate not only the great quantities of sandwiches, cakes and cookies provided by the hospitable Swedes, but the Swedish dishes which had been displayed as well. Sons and daughters of the pioneers, also in Swedish costume, sang the songs of the homeland and, upon a grassy slope, performed the very colorful Swedish folk dances. Speeches were made by many distinguished visitors, and a spirit of warm and happy fellowship prevailed.

In the hall was a table reminiscent of the depression years when the flour sack proved its usefulness, for on it were beautifully bleached sacks made into tablecloths, pillow cases and dresses and shirts for boys and girls. Doctor McNaughton praised this exhibit, which showed the skill with the needle which almost every Swedish woman possessed. Those who shared in this very successful event recall the day with justifiable pride.

Two of the districts used their share of the prize to purchase hardwood for a new floor for the hall, while Swea, with typical Swedish foresight, used theirs toward the purchase of a purebred Hereford bull to improve their own herds of cattle.

## THRESHING ON THE PRAIRIES

Each grain of wheat which was grown in the colony in 1887 was priceless, and to insure against loss the grain was placed on a sheet of tent canvass and flailed.

John Bird, of the Clumber district, brought the first steam threshing outfit to the colony, with all the grain being threshed from stacks. John had two teams of horses for transporting the engine, and each farmer was responsible for moving the separator from farm to farm. The farmer also provided fuel for the wood burning engine. The crew, numbering from twenty to twenty-six men, was hired by John Bird and travelled with the machine. The farmer's job was to attend to bagging the grain as it flowed from the separator. Threshing time was one of feverish activity, and the farmer slaughtered a pig, and perhaps a calf, while his wife baked great batches of bread, cakes and pies for each day's meals.

About the end of the century, the people of the colony called a meeting and, after lengthy discussion, decided to buy a threshing machine. Twenty or more men formed a syndicate, but some were doubtful of the success of this new venture, for the colony was not well settled and was more or less divided into two parts geographically, with people having widely different interests. The misgivings of the few were not unfounded, and as each threshing season drew near battles were waged, verbal if not fistic. There were always two controversial questions: who should be hired to run the machine?, and where should the threshing begin? However, this machine did help to solve their threshing problem, for it could handle as much as 1200 bushels a day.

In 1903 the Persson brothers bought the latest available threshing outfit, a Case with a traction engine. The separator was equipped with a self-feeder and stacker, and wherever men gathered they discussed this machine. Lauritz Andersen was the first thresherman to bring in a self-propelled steam engine from the south railway line, and people walked to meet him, all thrilled at the sight of the big machine climbing the hills and making what seemed to them incredible speed as it travelled over the winding trails. The Perssons began their "run" by stook threshing around Hazelcliffe, then moving through the Bohemian and Hungarian settlements to the Swedish colony, where they finished the "run" by stack threshing all that remained to be done.

Old timers recall with nostalgic pleasure the old threshing days. Former firemen remember the mornings when they arose at four in order to have the necessary steam to begin work at 6 o'clock. At 5 a.m. a long blast from the whistle awakened the teamsters, who had to feed and harness their horses and eat their own breakfasts before six. Another long, peremptory whistle ordered all to the fields, and the men hastily climbed into the wagon racks and hurried from the yard. Two short blasts plainly said "stand by for action", and then the men would stand with their eyes fixed on the separator man, who would then nod to the spike pitchers. They sprang in-



to action, and another day's work had begun. A short, sharp blast caused uneasiness, for it signified that something was wrong. The tankman urged his team to greater speed when three sharp whistles warned him that the water supply was low, while four toots told the teamsters to hasten with their loads. The most welcome sound was the long whistle calling the men to their meals, and at its sound the busy women began filling the big meat platters and vegetable bowls, for in a matter of minutes as many as twenty-six hungry men would be seated at the long tables. In later years the cook cars which formed a part of the threshing outfits relieved the women of this labor. During the threshing season, there was no definite "quitting time", and if rain or snow threatened the work continued by the light of burning strawstacks.

The combines of today seem prosaic machines in comparison with the old threshing machines with their big crews, made up of some of the most colorful characters of the old west. But one or two men, using one of the large, modern combines now found in the district, can harvest an average of one hundred and fifty bushels an hour.

## THE SWEDISH COLONY PICNIC

For many years the summer picnic which commemorates the arrival of the first settlers was the highlight in the social life of the colony. Today its significance is almost forgotten, except by a few pioneers and by those who are interested in maintaining a custom begun over seventy years ago.

The first picnic was held at the home of Nils Johanson, the site of Ohlen Post Office, but with the years and the growth of the colony the location of the picnic changed. Once a shady, grassy spot had been selected, the young men of the colony built rustic tables and benches and prepared the grounds for the games, enjoyed by young and old alike. Excitement grew as the day approached, and the young ladies with new summer hats hoped for a sunny day. In the kitchens there was great activity as each Swedish cook prepared for the picnic feast. In later years, when the attendance of people from outside the colony grew very large, the practice of setting a table for all was discontinued, and families and friends gathered in groups to share and enjoy the contents of the baskets.

Many of the early picnics were attended by Emanuel Ohlen, the founder of the colony. He was often accompanied by friends from Winnipeg who were interested in this new experiment of settling people of one nationality in a bloc. These portly gentlemen invariably made speeches, and as the table was cleared to serve as a platform the people settled down with an air of expectancy, ready to listen to the visitors discuss some pertinent subject of the times.

The colony had its share of speech makers, who welcomed an opportunity to mount the platform, and very few visitors could equal these Swedes in making extemporaneous speeches. Some of the listeners, who had been up since dawn, grew drowsy in the warm summer air and welcomed the community singing which followed the oratory. Such singing was seldom heard outside the colony, and when it was accompanied by the soft music of the guitar, the visitors listened with surprised delight.

Games were enjoyed during the afternoon, and the young teenagers particularly enjoyed various singing action games, all brought from the homeland and later known as folk dances. The lack of a booth where refreshments might be obtained in no way lessened the pleasure of the day. Such booths, with their supplies of gaily-colored candies, cold lemonade, ice cream, and tangy-flavored golden oranges, made their appearance later, and at the same time the practice of giving money as prizes for the contests was begun. The booths added color and an air of festivity to the picnics, but in the lean years even the most indulgent parents could provide their children with very few nickels from the family purse, which was always found deep in father's pocket. Thus it was that the boys and girls who excelled in sports enjoyed the most treats from the booth.

One young matron recalls a picnic day when the unusual sight of oranges and ice cream caused her to cast her teen-age dignity to the winds; with a fine disregard for the opinions of her less uninhibited companions, she ran and jumped with such determination and gay abandon that at least eight ice cream cones and a few precious oranges were needed to cool her parched and greedy throat. This same girl has travelled far and dined in many glamorous places, but she still considers an orange and an ice cream cone "a most desirable combination".

The happy picnic day ended all too soon, and the deepening twilight found the people on their way home, once more to take up their everyday tasks. However, during the early years, the festivities did not end with the first day, for on the next afternoon many of the young men and girls returned to the grounds, where they enjoyed a happy companionship as they cleared up the scene of the picnic. They joined in folk games, and sang and talked as they rested, then ate their bountiful lunch. Yesterday they had worked to give pleasure to others, but today was theirs to enjoy as they wished.

Later picnics saw exciting baseball games as the feature attractions, with dances to follow in the evenings, but for downright pleasure and good fellowship none of these has ever equalled the first old-fashioned Swedish picnic.

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## BASKET SOCIAL

This, usually an annual function, was a custom that should never have been allowed to die out. It provided a comparatively painless way of extracting money from the unsuspecting males, while it offered unlimited scope for parading the domestic talents of the young ladies. It was also a triple barrelled form of entertainment, providing fun before, during and after the event.

Everyone had fun in anticipation of the day. For weeks preceding the event the young maidens spent long hours in camera, designing and manufacturing what was to be the most attractive looking container. This was a carefully guarded secret. The young men of the village sought to penetrate the iron curtains, so set up, and occasionally gained some information illegally via a younger brother or sister. If the maid had a steady beau he was permitted to view the completed creation so that he would know on which one to bid. Married couples frequently worked together building their baskets. They were of all shapes, sizes and hues. Some were magnificent and costly productions, others were masterpieces of ingenuity.

The last few days were spent preparing the delicacies that were enclosed in the baskets. This was a wonderful opportunity for the girls to exhibit their talent as cooks, and remembering that one route to a man's heart is through his stomach, they spared no effort in trying to outdo one another with their culinary achievements. The male meanwhile was busy earning the cash with which to impress the lady whom he secretly admired.

Came the big day! The girls smuggled carefully wrapped bundles into the hall and deposited them altogether in a secluded pre-arranged location to await the auction. When this hour arrived the committee in charge of festivities unveiled and displayed the baskets. The auctioneer came forward and took advantage of this opportunity to show off. He selected these original "do it yourself products" one at a time and held them up for the awe and admiration of the assembled crowd, and bidding commenced.

Now came the opportunity for the male to shine. Many a youth struggled between his aversion to part with his hard earned cash and a reckless desire to impress the ladies, in this rivalry between men. The practical jokers had a great deal of fun forcing the lads with serious intentions to pay exorbitant prices for boxes eagerly sought. Occasionally the joke backfired and the joker found himself stuck with a high priced basket and an unwanted girl on his hands.

It was good clean fun, on the whole, and it provided conversation and memories for many more days. The girls demurely accepting well earned compliments for their baskets and lunch. The boys swaggering a little when the high prices paid were mentioned and

each bragging about the "banquet" prepared by his particular girl friend.

\* \* \*

### ...SPORTS...

The first indication of organized sports in the district was the formation of a soccer team whose manager was Tom Lumsden, a burly Scot. It was a very good team and had four old country members with wide playing experience. Their fame soon spread beyond the confines of the district and it was their boast that they could beat all comers. This they soon had the opportunity to prove in 1905 when the first local sports day was held. It was an ambitious affair advertised by large posters offering grand prizes for baseball and lesser competitions and a silver cup for a soccer tournament. It was not the prevailing custom to collect gate receipts, but to canvass the merchants for donations. When these proved insufficient to finance the day's activities and there was no sign of a silver cup, the open-handed committee knew they were in for a bad time. They had some good fortune when only one baseball team showed; however, four or five football teams were entered, and with no cup to be seen they were still in trouble. Their only hope of rescue lay in a win by the Stockholm team so they recruited a couple of braves from the Mission to round out their numbers. One of these boys could run like the wind and centre the ball over the opposing players, with deadly accuracy, to Douglas Macdonald who was a good kicking forward. Wm. Sahlmark was a mighty fullback. When Stockholm, after beating Esterhazy, met St. Lukes in the final game, these three star players led the home team to victory and so saved face for the committee and the village and made good their team's boast.

After the first World War baseball became very popular. Here is the lineup of the first local team organized by Wm. Laing, Jack Hunter and Holger Munch in 1920:

Pitcher—Tom Dupre  
Catcher—Ab Raff  
Short stop—Gordon Parker  
First base—Bert Edquist  
Second base—Sten Stenberg  
Third base—Cliff Hunter  
Fielders—Ernie Lepire, Laddie Toth, Russ Bell

About the same time two tennis courts were laid out on the C.P.R. property east of the station, and there were many inter town matches with places as far distant as Melville and Neudorf. Tennis continued to be popular through the next twenty years. Two members of the Stockholm Club, Bus Holstein and Vic Erikson, won

every event in their class in the south-eastern tennis championship events held in Moosomin in 1930.

Married men's softball was played in 1930-32 and for many years during the thirties there were ball club leagues operating on a schedule with Atwater, Bangor, Dubuc and Esterhazy, with loyal fans following the local team through all their games. We also had hockey teams wherein the Balog brothers and the Joseph brothers shone.

Curling has continued to be popular since 1931. It is one game where oldsters and youngsters meet on a more or less equal footing. The first rink to seek laurels abroad, was D. S. Macdonald, Bill Persson, H. Munch and James Fraser (skip), who entered the Regina Bonspiel in 1936. When they arrived home, after losing as many games as they won, they were the target for a lot of ribbing. Almost every rink in town handed them a challenge and in fun they were labelled "The Big Four". A ladies rink, skipped by Mrs. Sten Stenberg of Dubuc, was more successful in winning trophies for the last two successive years in the Yorkton Ladies' Open Bonspiel. Other members of the rink were Mrs. Bert Clements, Mrs. James Junek and Mrs. Larry Chelle (nee Mickey Jacob of Stockholm). An all Stockholm ladies' rink was the only undefeated rink among twenty entries in a two day knockout bonspiel held in Esterhazy in 1956. We have also had rinks of both boys and girls who have won in the district competitions. Curling has been participated in by more villagers with more enthusiasm than any other sport. In the early days there was as much evidence of cutthroat competition in the packed waiting room and crowded board walk as on the ice. Some happy memories include idiosyncracies of the various members—sans malice—there were:

Grace Larter, of the mighty arm, who would pick up the rock and as she awaited her skipper's command, calmly clean the bottom of the stone by the simple process of rubbing it up and down on the front of her jacket.

Irma Munch, who swung out with a beautifully graceful delivery and immediately after became involved in an animated conversation with whoever was near, never heeding where the rock came to rest, to the somewhat amused exasperation of her husband, Holger.

Victor Bowman, the life and death curler, and one of our best, who curled every game over at breakfast the following morning, with sugar bowl, salt and pepper shakers etc.

Frank Kuzback, who tossed his rock, then followed it down the ice like the Tower of Pisa in motion, leaning in the direction that he wished the rock would travel.

Douglas Macdonald, who always managed to lose most games in the draw. The feature of his few wins that panicked the onlookers

and frenzied the frustrated losers was that they were always against the top rink and by such scores as 19-1 or 22-0.

Lastly Goldie Stenberg and your writer, who were much laughed at because we couldn't lift the rocks so from the undignified and ungraceful position of squatting on hands and knees with a forceful kick from the hack, pushed the stones up the ice.

We remember too with pleasure some of the friends from the neighboring town of Esterhazy with whom we have participated more frequently in sports events than with any other neighbor. Rivalry has always existed between the two towns. While we have watched them leave us far behind in growth and material wealth, with neither happiness nor resentment, we must confess to being quietly but somewhat smugly happy on the many instances when we defeated them in sports.

With the popular trend being toward spectator sports and with all weather roads facilitating travel to larger centres curling remains at present the only organized sport being indulged in by old or young. An attempt was made just after the Legion Hall was built to start badminton and there was great enthusiasm for a few months before it died out. Recently several efforts have been made to revive baseball but the only team in the community that has successfully survived is known as the New Stockholm team with the majority of the players living in that district.

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This account of how a sports event may happen to be handled in a village was whipped up by the husband of one of the authors of this book, while the first ladies' bonspiel was in progress. We still haven't chosen between suing and patting him on the back for his "few well chosen? words", but here they are.

The first Ladies' Bonspiel ever held in Stockholm began Jan. 23, 1950 with twelve rinks competing. I am writing this before the end of the 'spiel has been reached and whether it will end in a huge success or a free for all is on the knees of the Gods. Violet Juneke and Mickey Chelle were the two main movers in starting this venture and selling the idea to forty six other women.

The Executive of the Curling Club were approached and decided at a meeting to charge the ladies \$15.00 for the use of the rink to cover the expenses of lights, wood and caretaker. This was not received with very much favor by the ladies and by the time a day had passed it reminded me of our beehives when we robbed them of honey. Our Executive was roundly criticized both publicly and privately. The ladies had many schemes to even the score with and some of them were rather frightening.

At first I heard they had ten rinks entered and I was amazed; never thought there were so many women. Finally they had eleven

rinks and my good wife, Zetta, who was asked by the committee to make the draw, started in with full speed and had the draw completed when there was another rink entered, making it twelve. Nothing to do but make another draw. After this had been done two curlers dropped out and a frantic search for two more curlers got under way. This was finally accomplished.

It was quite a difficult time for some of the ladies to acquire suitable clothes and I noticed the wife had even loaned my ski pants to one of the enthusiasts. This did not bother me but it was hard on moths who seemed to have taken over. Thirty-five below zero will teach these pests that life is not all wool and a yard wide.

3:30 P.M. Monday January 23rd was the zero hour and there were quite a few men on hand to see the fun. Some were busy explaining to their wives and sweethearts how to throw a rock. The meaning of the inturn and the outturn was explained and how to identify the rocks. The efficient ladies' committee had arranged for a little colour to the event by inviting the mayor of the village, Joseph J. Herperger, to throw the first rock. Wife, Zetta, was delegated to make a speech of introduction and to thank all the ladies for their



**Anna Berg. First Graduate Nurse**

wonderful turnout. She spent her noonhour making up this speech and after a lot of re-vamping had what you would call a few well chosen words. However, in the confusion of picking rocks, and the skips instructing their players of their positions with the help of the males, our genial caretaker, Hank Seman, not having been notified of any formalities, steps up and tells the gathering that Mr. Herperger will open the bonspiel for them. Joe does this in his usual efficient way and throws the first rock. The ladies are away to the start of their first bonspiel. If anyone wants to see the speech Zetta prepared

she likely has put it away for another day.

Mrs. Erikson, our grandmother of curling, was skip of one of the first rinks to play. She showed her usual Viking spirit despite her seventy plus summers and played a hard fought battle.

The weather is doing its best to spoil the fun, 40 below and lower. On Thursday morning the radio reported 50 below in Regina and

my conservative thermometer showed -43. Being one of these persons that have always been kind to animals I suggested to the bonspiel committee that they should call the 'spiel off on account of the weather. I should have known better than to open my big mouth with free advice. The committee foolishly acted on my suggestion and cancelled the night games. This was not taken with much favor by some of the members. I never knew before there were so many warm blooded women. Some even walked two miles to town to play their game which had been cancelled.

The ladies served lunch on Thursday to take care of the valuable prizes they had bought and to pay the curling club that much talked of \$15.00. The men enjoyed the cabbage rolls, while the women sweated out on the ice trying to sweep rocks, headed for the boards, into the house.

As the 'spiel is now moving into the finals I am not going to wait to announce the winners. They will have a year to remember their triumph and the losers will have to live in hope for another year and another bonspiel. Happy to report that I can still call you ladies. My congratulations to the bonspiel committee: Mrs. J. R. Junek, Mrs. Wm. Laing Jr., and Emma Molnar. Remember, the recording angel never asks whether you won or lost, just how you played the game.

\* \* \*

Many descendants of the pioneers of the Swedish colony and the village of Stockholm have travelled far and wide and have influenced countless lives. To name them all would be impossible, but the chosen are typical of many.

Anna, the elder daughter of E. A. and Christina Berg, was the first of many from the district to choose nursing as a career, graduating from a hospital in St. Paul, Minnesota, which she had entered about 1906.

William, the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. A. G. Sahlmark, was the first to become a doctor. His daughters, Jean and Margaret, are honor graduates of the Royal Academy of Music in London, England, and are internationally known. Jean, the pianist, continued her career in the United States, while Margaret is in England.

Phyllis Zakrison Johanson, daughter of the late N. Zakrison and his wife Anna, has inherited much of the pioneering instincts of her grandparents, Pastor and Mrs. A. G. Olson, and of her parents. Phyllis, a graduate nurse, carries on her work in such isolated northern outposts as Norway House and Cross Lake. Her sister, Doris, as the wife of a Lutheran minister, the Reverend Virgil Lundquist of Kansas, is an active community worker.

Alice Major, the only daughter of Ruby and the late John Major, is another Olson granddaughter who chose nursing as a career. Dur-



ing the second World War she was a Nursing Sister in the R.C.A.F., and after her discharge became an instructress in neurological and neurosurgical nursing in Montreal. She later taught at the School of Nursing of McGill University, and at present is an Assistant Professor at the Boston University School of Nursing.



**Jean Sahlmark Réti**  
Concert Pianist, New York, N. Y.

The pioneering spirit of the late Ingle Sjodin and his wife did not die with them but goes marching on in Kenya, East Africa, where his granddaughter, Grace McFadden Campbell, is a missionary of the Presbyterian Church of the United States. Grace is the daughter of the former Hanny Sjodin and her husband.

Karen Persson Closson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Godfrey Persson and granddaughter of John and Karen Persson, early turned her attention to politics and for some years was very active in the Co-operative Commonwealth Youth Movement, serving first as a provincial organizer and later as provincial president. Following this, she became its National Secretary.

She was one of the organizers of the C.C.Y.M. camping association and served as its first secretary. Today she is an active worker in the ranks of the C.C.F. party.

Joyce Laing Johnson, only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Laing, went to Regina while in her early teens, to continue her musical education. A member of the Conservatory of Music, Mrs. Johnson is an active figure in the musical world.

Paulus Stromgren and his wife Golin were pioneers who served their church with humble devotion. Mrs. Stromgren's exceptionally fine voice attracted the attention of the outside world, but she steadfastly refused to use it except in her church and her home. Today, four of their grandchildren are engaged in active missionary work in widely separated parts of the world. Bernard Fredlund works with the Eskimos, while his brother Gustaf is in Africa. Mabel

Fredlund is a missionary in Japan, and her brother Donald is in Pakistan.

George R. Lamont, only son of Dougald Lamont, worked for a short time in the local bank before leaving for Winnipeg, where he was married in 1931. In the 1940's the airline company for which he

worked as an accountant transferred him to Montreal, and he later moved to Toronto to become an executive with a large American advertising firm.

Grandchildren of the early settlers are settled in as many directions as there are points to a compass. Arthur Anderson, son of A. G. Anderson and grandson of Anders Johnson, moved to Churchill, married and settled down there to operate a store and a crating and packing service.



Mrs. Sara Erikson

Willard Dougald Persson, son of W. S. Persson and the late Edith Persson, lives in Vancouver, where he and Doctor Hugh Sproston, a classmate at the Ontario Veterinary College, operate a small animal hospital. Willard is a past president of both the Vancouver Small Animal Veterinary Association and the British Columbia Veterinary Association.

Reggie Patterson, also of Vancouver and son of Richard Patterson, has an interesting hobby which has also paid him well. In his spare time, Reggie makes highly decorative saddles, and his work is of such high calibre that it rated an article and photographs in one of Vancouver's daily newspapers.

Ian Macdonald, son of Douglas and Marguerite Macdonald and grandson of Axel von Holstein Rathlou, was interested in radio from childhood, and built and operated his own amateur sending and receiving sets. He studied at technical schools in Winnipeg and Moose Jaw, then went to Coral Harbour in the Northwest Territories as an operator for the Department of Transport. He is now the officer in charge of the Radio Range Station at Ennedai Lake.

While some went north, east and west, Albin Erikson, eldest son of Eric and Sara Erikson, went south to Hollywood in 1922 when it was difficult to get work. The first years there were tough going, until he obtained entrance to a moving picture studio by a ruse. Noticing a plasterer entering, he offered to carry his equipment. By that afternoon he was on the studio's payroll and remained to become a highly skilled technician in a field where only the best survive. He

spent fifteen years with the R.K.O. company, and for twelve years was studio technician for Hal Roach T.V. Productions. As a sportsman and a master craftsman, it was only natural that the the making of sports equipment should become his hobby. He makes all his tackle for trout and deep sea fishing, but even more fascinating in his priceless gun collection. Most sportsmen buy guns and use them as they are, but Albin buys them, tears them down and rebuilds them, changing the balance to suit his particular needs and the style to suit his hunting purpose. He replaces the original stocks with hand-fashioned, beautifully carved myrtle wood. He returns to the home district each fall for the hunting, bringing these beautiful weapons with him.

Gordon Munch, only son of Holger and the late Irma Munch, was employed at the local branch of the Royal Bank of Canada before enrolling at the University of Manitoba. During the war he served with the Royal Canadian Artillery in Holland, as a lieutenant, and returned after the war with a Scottish bride. He acquired a degree in law and is in practice in Winnipeg.

Lydia Lindwall Soderquist (Mrs. Severius Soderquist), eldest daughter of the oldest surviving pioneer, Z. E. Lindwall, lives within a few miles of her birthplace and could well typify the many excellent homemakers in the district who are descendants of the Swedish pioneers. Lydia Soderquist's quiet, pleasant manner endears her to many, and she is known as an excellent homemaker who delights in sharing her home with others. Since the death of her mother, her ninety-three year old father has been an honored member of the Soderquist household, where he is frequently reminded of past happy days when his wife prepared dishes similar to Lydia's and presided over an equally bounteous table. Severius and the two sons of the family help to create the happy atmosphere of his home, where Lydia reigns as queen, not for a day, but for the years.

\* \* \*

Donald Wall, a classmate and chum of Dean Halliwell is also a source of pride to the community. After obtaining his B.A. from the University of Saskatchewan, he too became a Pilot Officer in the R.C.A.F. during the later years of the war. On discharge he re-entered the university where he took his M.A. He is now living in Ottawa and as a Privy Council Officer, he is a member of the cabinet secretariat.

\* \* \*

Many of our young men and women served with distinction in Canada's armed forces, and some of them did not return. Flight Lieutenant Robert Clements was one of the lucky lads. He was at the controls of a heavily loaded Lancaster bomber enroute to Dussel-

dorf, Germany, when it was shot down by a Nazi fighter plane; less than a minute after he and his crew had parachuted into the dark November night, their aircraft burst into flames. They had been shot down over northern Belgium, and Bob landed in a tree. Carefully burying his parachute, he took his survival kit and began to walk, hoping to reach the coast and eventually to make his way back to England. For two days he hid in the woods by day and walked by night, but when this brought him no nearer his destination he realized he must seek help. He reached an isolated farm home and boldly knocked on the door, which was opened by a friendly Belgian who had an English wife. They shared their meal of black bread and potatoes with him, then hid him in their barn. Later he was closely questioned by another Belgian, after which steps were taken to start him on his road to freedom, a road often fraught with grave danger both to Bob and to the brave men and women of the underground. The friendly Belgians, after destroying his uniform, clothed him from their meagre wardrobes, laughing as they looked at the tall, lanky Canadian in the clothing which they hoped would disguise his identity from the enemy. He had many gruelling experiences before he reached Paris, but one of the most gruelling was in that city, where he spent sixteen days hidden in a completely dark closet in a house occupied by both pro-Nazis and loyal Frenchmen. Bob was warned to be silent, and his only exercise was a short walk at midnight. Leaving Paris, he hid during the day and walked at night over frozen fields in thin-soled shoes, rode hidden in farm carts, even rode in railroad coaches with Nazis as fellow passengers, then finally climbed the icy mountains which brought him into Spain. He made his way across Spain and was taken to Gibraltar and freedom by the friendly captain of an oil tanker, who hid Bob and a companion in a small hole in the prow of his ship.

\* \* \*

The story of the experiences of Bob Clements was one of grim suspense ending in averted tragedy but the fortunes of Charles Clayton were quite the reverse. Charley enlisted in December of 1941 and reported for training soon after. In May of 1943 he survived a plane crash in Wales suffering only minor injuries that required but two weeks hospitalization. Three months later he was in another plane crash, this time in Lydda, Palestine. Fortunately none of the crew was injured. After surviving thirty two operations of suspense filled moments he was discharged, a navigator with the rank of Flight Lieutenant. Home, and happily awaiting marriage in the near future, Charley became ill. Death came Aug. 24, 1946 due to peritonitis from a ruptured appendix.

\* \* \*

## THE WEALTH OF THE STOCKHOLM DISTRICT

Graingrowing and stock raising provide a good livelihood for the people of this district. Surveys made by the University of Saskatchewan have shown that the land in this locality is deficient in nitrogen and phosphorus, and during the 1930's farmers began to use commercial fertilizers which contain these two essential substances, which strengthen the straw and produce heavier yields of higher quality grain. Between 1950 and 1956, according to figures supplied by the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool in Regina, a total of two million, two hundred and eight thousand bushels of grain were shipped from the Stockholm district.

During the period from 1919 to 1955 the local stock buyers, Douglas Macdonald and William Persson, shipped twelve hundred carloads of stock to the markets in Winnipeg. The value of the four hundred and seventy-seven cars shipped in the years from 1945 to 1955 was \$1,404,101.46. Bill Persson and stock-shipping days are firmly linked together in the minds of all who have at any time called Stockholm home. His Scotch partner's integrity and business ability are appreciated by stock shippers, but they expect Bill to take a personal interest in the progress of each animal to market.

Shipments of cream, eggs, and poultry add to the farm income, life in this pleasant parkland district surely is among the best in the province.

\* \* \*



Leading the Jubilee Parade

## XI.

# OUR JUBILEE CELEBRATION

**Y**OU are now acquainted with the story of the people of our district. They differ in their nationalities and their religious affiliations. They left their native countries for a variety of reasons, but with the same hope for equality of opportunity. With a true spirit of democracy, they have lived here side by side, in comparative harmony which reached its climax in our local Jubilee celebration, held in 1955 to observe the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Province of Saskatchewan.

Members of the Jubilee committee, representative of the whole district, were Monsignor Paul Santha, Frank Clarey, Erling V. Lindwall, Godfrey Persson, Nick Shivak, Louis Matsalla, Frank Seman, James Schwitzer and the co-ordinator, William S. Persson. The first meetings were held well in advance of the celebration, and extensive plans were made. The effort was to be threefold, commencing with a morning parade, followed by an afternoon program from an outdoor stage, and ending with a dance at night. Lunches were to be served by the church auxiliaries, and there was to be a museum.

This was a heavy program to prepare for and a lot of individual planning was required. All was not smooth sailing. There was the usual bickering that accompanies most undertakings engineered by human beings. There were days when even the hardest-working members of the committee all but gave up the ghost. Fortunately, careful planning, patience and perseverance brought a happy conclusion. Mr. Clarey was a constant source of encouragement and deserves a large share of credit for the final success.

The public school grounds proved an ideal setting, with the school housing the museum. For the outdoor stage, built against the side of the Legion Hall, a backdrop of plywood was erected and effectively decorated with jubiléé bunting and pennants. An old-fashioned booth, complete with a roof of poplar boughs, was set up as a lemonade stand. The Lutheran and Catholic churches had booths on the grounds, while across the street the ladies of the United Church served at tables set out under the trees on the church lawn, a cool and inviting setting. All groups reported a successful day.

The museum, in charge of Harold Sundberg, John Chelle, and Mrs. W. S. Persson, held a remarkable display of family heirlooms and

treasures brought from many native lands. All the items were interesting, old and varied, and many were unusual. While it would be impossible to enumerate them all, a few deserve special mention. Objects of special interest included a large collection of copper pieces from Sweden, among them a beautiful tea service and tray. Lovely pewter hot-water pitchers from Scotland, as well as several delicate pieces of china from other countries were shown. There were ancient firearms from Scotland, Ireland and Sweden, steel shears from the southern United States bearing the date 1828, a homemade wooden churn, a dish for mixing butter, and a small ornamental wooden chest from Sweden. A cashmere marriage shawl from Hungary was displayed, as were many other old and beautiful pieces of linen and crochet work. Among them was a colorful tablecloth from Norway, while there were also ancient and ornate brass candlesticks from the same country.

Possibly the most complete display was an array of lighting equipment, marking over one hundred years of progress in illumination. In this display were candlesticks well over a hundred years of age, as well as oil lamps, from the very earliest types used, with tiny china bowls, to student lamps of the 1860's, the gaudily elegant styles of the early 1900's, and the more recent pressure types. Modern electric lamps completed the picture. Old photographs and the deed to the first homestead filed on in the district attracted much attention, while the most unusual exhibit was a high-wheeled bicycle which had been ridden in the parade by the owner's son, Hugh Olson. One of the most highly prized items was a large woolen Swedish flag, a gift sent directly from King Gustav V of Sweden to the Swedish colony on the occasion of their Diamond Jubilee celebration in 1946. The oldest and most valuable collection was that of heirloom silver from Denmark, the property of the von Holstein Rathlou family. The bowls of two of the spoons were centered with large silver coins, minted in 1682 and 1694. Many people expressed regret that it was impossible to include in the displays the local grandfather clocks, but facilities for moving and displaying them in safety were lacking. Our village houses four of these old timepieces, each venerable, beautiful, and in excellent running order.

A guest register was kept in the museum and, although a few visitors escaped the eagle eye of the registrar, four hundred and eighty signatures appear in the book. Their addresses indicate that the visitors came from points as far apart as Churchill, Manitoba and San Jose, California.

On the school grounds, in addition to the program at the outdoor stage, there were a ferris wheel, a bingo game, and rides on a string of Shetland ponies owned by Mr. Smart of Hazelcliffe to provide added entertainment for the younger fry. The old-timers, our

honored guests, were supplied with special ribbons attached to pin holders containing their names. Benches were provided for their comfort while chatting or watching the proceedings.



**Hughie Olson on early day style  
of locomotion**

The program gave evidence of much practice and preparation, and produced a variety of talent. The Hungarian choir sang under the direction of the Sisters of Social Service, who were also responsible for a splendid exhibition of Hungarian folk dancing by dancers of three age groups, all in native costumes and accompanied on an accordion by thirteen-year-old Arnold Banga. The Swedish choir sang under the direction of Godfrey Persson, and a group of four couples in Swedish provincial costume executed two folk dances of their native land, accompanied by Mrs. Hans Paulson and the Hofstrand brothers, Bert and Ed. All the participants gave memorable performances.

Local speakers included Monsignor Paul Santha, the Reverend Alfred B. Sanders of the Lutheran church, and Charles Millham, reeve of the municipality. We were fortunate in also having such distinguished guest speakers as the federal Minister of Agriculture, the Right Honorable James G. Gardiner, our local M.L.A., Asmundur Lopston, and Dr. William Sahlmark. As a boy and the son of one of the early pioneers of the district, the latter had attended the first school to be opened, first as a student and later as a teacher.

Special tribute was paid to the first child born in the colony, Alex Sahlmark, the first child born in the Hungarian colony, Joe Shivak, the senior resident of the village, Douglas Macdonald, and the oldest living member of the original Swedish colony, ninety-two year old Zacharias E. Lindwall, all of whom were present. Master of ceremonies for the afternoon program was William S. Persson, the Jubilee co-ordinator, who invited the real old-timers to the stage, where they were the recipients of praise and gratitude from all the speakers, with special photographs being taken to mark the occasion. The day ended with a well-attended dance in the evening.

Choronologically, our parade came first, though we have left a description of it to the last, for we regard it as the 'piece de resis-





Old Timers, taken at the Saskatchewan Jubilee Celebration

stance' of the day. Many people remarked that, in comparison with somewhat larger communities, they knew of few parades in the province to equal it and of none to excel it. Even the weather cooperated, for the day was calm, warm, and sunny.

Heading the parade were three riders on spirited horses. Albert Shivak carried the Union Jack, Robert Landine the Swedish flag, and Stanley Drotar the Hungarian flag. There followed three unmounted members of the Yorkton detachment of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Junek's band, a series of floats mostly depicting themes of early days or of progress, and machinery of all kinds, both ancient and modern. It would be too great an undertaking to describe each float individually, but they all showed ingenuity and much effort in their design and construction. A few, however, we feel to have been outstanding and deserving of special mention.

One showed three women, dressed in early costumes of their country of origin, actually operating spinning wheels. Needless to say, these ladies were not in their teens. Another demonstrated a family of the early days going about the duties of the home with some of the oldest equipment that was used in this district. Not to be outdone, the men had assembled three astonishingly accurate replicas of the earliest transportation facilities. A youth rode the high-wheeled bicycle which later appeared in the museum and, since it had to be ridden at quite a speed or not at all, rode it in and out among the floats. Another young man drove a tandem team hitched to a covered wagon or prairie schooner, complete and accurate in every detail. Two other gentlemen rode out in an early type wagon drawn by a bull harnessed to a mare with a colt at her heels. These animals were harnessed in an unusual manner, but one which was strictly in keeping with the earliest times. There were two other examples of slightly more recent modes of transportation, one in which a young couple rode in a top buggy, and the other where a barbershop quartette were harmonizing from the back seat of a 1912 Cadillac.

Some master mechanics must have spent long hours working on the ancient pieces of machinery which rumbled past on their own power, for none of them broke down or even halted the parade. Two of the oldest were a 15/30 four-cylinder Titan of 1919, owned and operated by Eric Berglund, and a 16/30 oil pull Rumley of 1923 vintage, owned and operated by Joe Seman. It was a sight to stir the most blasé moderne and to thrill the old-timer.

Such a large undertaking by such a small community left us all with a glow of achievement. We had paid our tribute to fifty and more years of progress and to our pioneers who had laid the solid foundation for it.

# APPENDIX

## IN MEMORIAM

1914—1918

Stenberg

Fritz

1939—1945

Danielson

Melvin

Hanis

George

Lindoff

Elmer

Macdonald

Ronald D. J.

Thompson

Rollo

Wall

Leroy

Korea

Stenseth

Robert

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“LET US ALWAYS REMEMBER AND  
HONOUR THEM”

HOMESTEADERS UP TO 1903

[illegible]

# List of Homesteaders up to 1903

(to accompany map)

- |                     |                    |                   |
|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Abrahamson       | 37. Isakson        | 73. Olson, O.     |
| 2. Anderson, L.     | 38. Jacobson       | 74. Olsson        |
| 3. Anderson, P.     | 39. Johanson, J.   | 75. Oroc          |
| 4. Arvidson         | 40. Johanson, N.   | 76. Oslund        |
| 5. Bacsu            | 41. Johnson, E.    | 77. Palmquist     |
| 6. Benke            | 42. Johnson, E. A. | 78. Pearson       |
| 7. Berg             | 43. Jones          | 79. Persson       |
| 8. Berglund, J.     | 44. Jonsson        | 80. Patrick       |
| 9. Berglund, N.     | 45. Kasabeka       | 81. Sahlmark, A.  |
| 10. Bergman         | 46. Katrenszky     | 82. Sahlmark, C.  |
| 11. Bergstrom       | 47. Knourek, A.    | 83. Sanstrom      |
| 12. Berthalon       | 48. Knourek, F.    | 84. Shepherd      |
| 13. Besson          | 49. Knourek, J     | 85. Sjödin        |
| 14. Bird            | 50. Knowler        | 86. Sjostrom      |
| 15. Blom            | 51. Knutson        | 87. Sobotka       |
| 16. Buxton          | 52. Lindgren       | 88. Stenberg, A.  |
| 17. Byron           | 53. Lindskog       | 89. Stenberg, J.  |
| 18. Carr            | 54. Lindwall       | 90. Stendahl      |
| 19. Christoferson   | 55. Lordet         | 91. Stromberg     |
| 20. Dahl            | 56. McKay          | 92. Stromgren     |
| 21. Delorme         | 57. Marcil         | 93. Stromquist    |
| 22. Dioseghy        | 58. Mario          | 94. Svedberg      |
| 23. Fodor           | 59. Moller         | 95. Svenson       |
| 24. Gale            | 60. Moss           | 96. Teng          |
| 25. Gavelin, I.     | 61. Neilson        | 97. Tranberg      |
| 26. Gavelin, N.     | 62. Nielson        | 98. Tranberg, H.  |
| 27. Gettis          | 63. Nikolauson     | 99. Tranberg, J.  |
| 28. Grimeau         | 64. Nilson         | 100. Vargo        |
| 29. Hammerstrom, F. | 65. Nilsson        | 101. Vasatko      |
| 30. Hammerstrom, K. | 66. Nordin         | 102. Vass         |
| 31. Hammerstrom, E. | 67. Norlin         | 103. Von Holstein |
| 32. Hedstrom        | 68. Ohlson         | 104. Westerlund   |
| 33. Hendrick        | 69. Olson, A.      | 105. Westin       |
| 34. Hendrickson     | 70. Olson, J.      | 106. Yecny        |
| 35. Hoglund, M.     | 71. Olson, J. C.   | 107. Zakrison     |
| 36. Hoglund, M.A.   | 72. Olson, N.      | 108. Zboray       |

# PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

## **Accountancy**

Robert Clements

## **Agriculture**

Rodney Jacobson

## **Arts**

Corinne Lamont B.A.  
Dean Halliwell B.A. M.A.  
B.L.S.

Donald Wall B.A. M.A.

## **Civil Engineering**

Irwin Nelson  
Darwin Stenberg

## **Electrical Engineering**

Hugh S. Macdonald  
Robert Landine—student

## **Geology**

Axel von Holstein Rathlouw

## **Law**

Gordon R. Munch

## **Medicine**

Dr. G. W. Sahlmark

## **Ministry**

Rev. Melvin Fredlund  
Rev. Gustaf Fredlund  
Rev. Albert Lindoff

## **Music**

Joyce M. Laing  
Jean Sahlmark  
Margaret Sahlmark

## **Nursing**

Alice Major M.A. B.N.R.N.

## **Radio Operator**

Ian A. Macdonald

## **Military Services**

Lt. John C. Persson R.C.N.  
L.A.C. Creighton Halliwell  
Sgt. George F. Kuzback  
L.A.C. Robert Wall  
Mina Rydberg Nelson,  
U.S.A.S.A.

## **Veterinary Surgery**

Dr. W. D. Persson

## **Wireless Telegraphy**

Lloyd Nelson

## **Registered Nurses**

Anna Berg  
Hulda Berg  
Margaret Berglund  
Alice Clayton  
Myrtle Crosswell  
Mona Erikson  
Esther Hofstrand

Anne Kuzback

Irene Meadows

Anna Olson

Nanna Olson

Yvonne Paulson

Phyllis Zakrisson

## **Business Training**

Elaine Clements

Ruth Clements

Audrey Coleman

Olga Hovland

Lily Kuzback

Augusta Landine

Ethel Meadows

Grace Meston

Ruby Meston

Myrna Nelson

Elaine Olson

Maureen Persson

Lorraine Raff

Inez Stenberg

Elsie Stromgren

Bertha Sundberg

## **Teachers**

Audrey Berglund

Verda Dahl

Melvin Drotar

Ebba Erikson

Edith Erikson

Esther (Olson) Hanson

Thelma Hofstrand

Edna Hoglund

Huno von Holstein Rathlouw

Inez Isakson

Vernald Johanson

Lily Kvinlaug

Ethel Lindoff

Clara Meston

Gordon Millham

James Millham

Bernice Olson

Elaine Olson

Olga Olson

Doris Paulson

Lenore Paulson

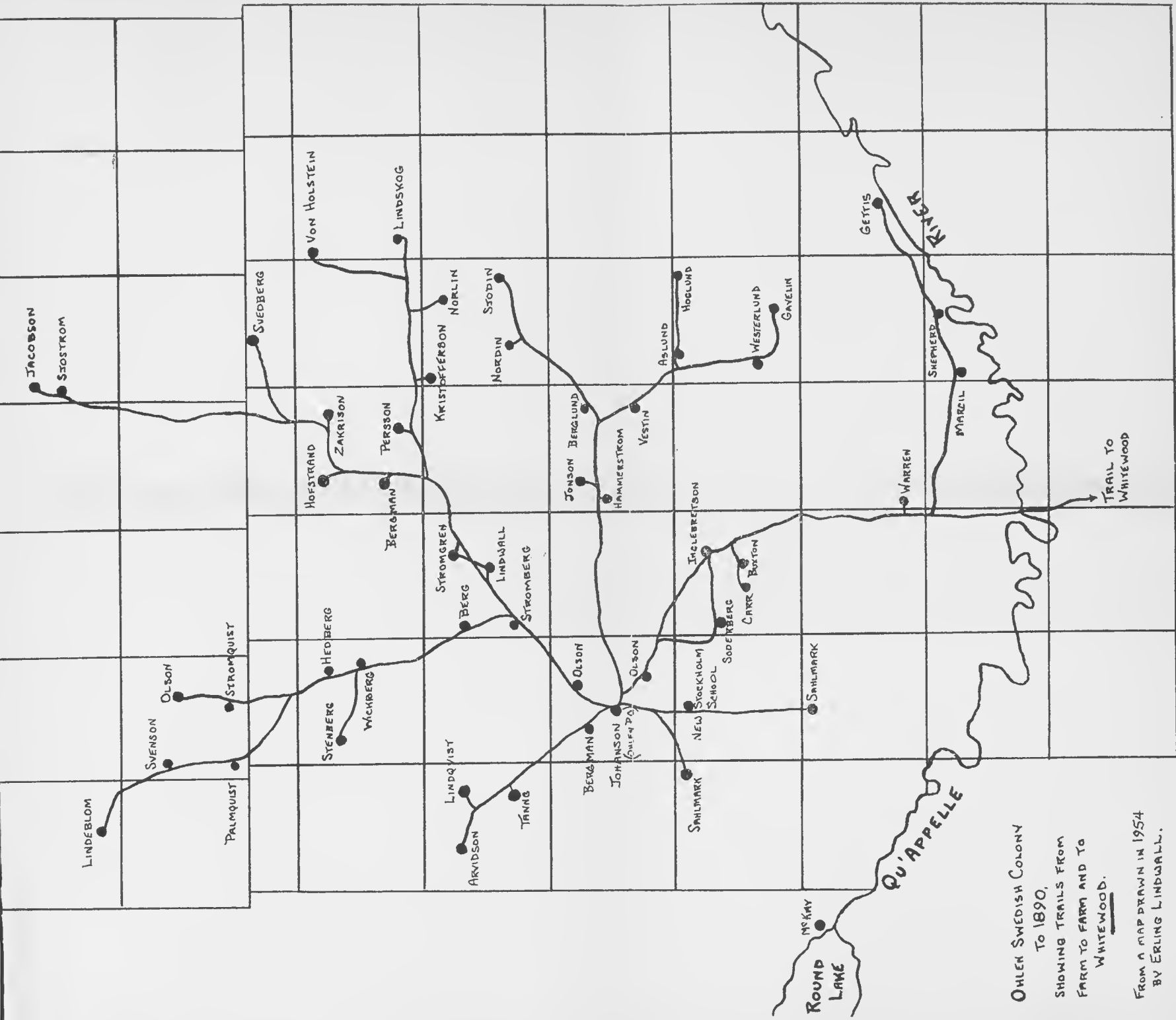
Allan Sahlmark

Ludwig Sahlmark

Myrita Selin

Glenn Stromberg

Gurin Stromgren



OHLEN SWEDISH COLONY  
To 1890,

SHOWING TRAILS FROM  
FARM TO FARM AND TO  
WHITEWOOD.

FROM A MAP DRAWN IN 1954  
BY ERLING LINDWALL.

## Date Due

[illegible]



FC 3549 S7 Z7 H18 1959  
HALLIWELL GLADYS M 1892-  
THREE SCORE AND TEN  
1886-1956 39235722 HSS



\*000003185675\*

FC 3549 S7 Z7 H18 1959  
Halliwell, Gladys M., 1892-.  
Three score and ten, 1886-  
1956;

0138369B MAIN

